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STEVE SEAGLE
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STAN LEE PRESENTS

MARVEL VISION 28

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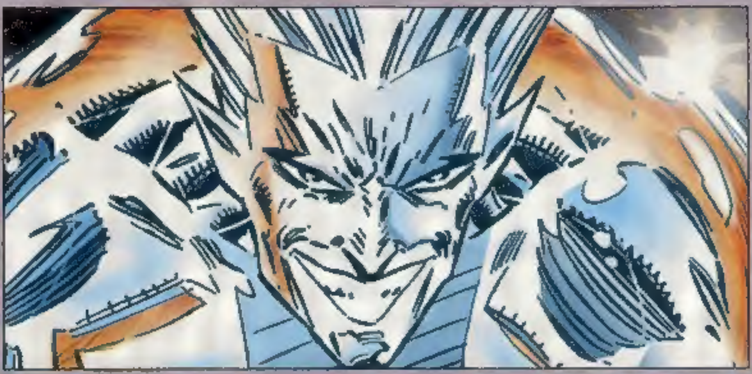

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April 1998

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Holly Weber and her new boyfriends

Pete Franco, Bob Harras and Julio before the Marvel X-Mas party

Pete and I get funky while Sylvia Masa, Julio and Kim Craven rock on

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to the start of another New Year for Marvel. This year is going to see Marvel get back to the top of the ladder; not that you readers of VISION have any reason to doubt Marvel's place in the comics world. But every now and then we ourselves see something in print that makes us all say: "Hey, have you been paying attention?"

Case in point: another comics review publication voted DC as Publisher of the Year. Well, do you know what we at Marvel have to say to that? "Enjoy it while it lasts, guys, 'cause it ain't gonna last long!"

Marvel is looking to make 1998 a year to remember. We're going to be launching and relaunching titles all throughout the year. One project on tap is the upcoming science fiction line tentatively to be entitled "Infinite Horizons." This was sparked by the success of our horror line, "Strange Tales" and my own interest in that otherworldly genre. Yes, loyal readers, I'm editing that as well as the Trek books. Another project to be on the lookout for is SPIDER-MAN. I can't divulge what is going to happen just yet, but it's big, really big.

As for right now, this issue of Marvel VISION is going to let you in on a project that will be appearing in the first quarter of '98, MARVEL UNIVERSE: A sharp look at the history of the Marvel Universe in story form. If you liked UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN, you'll love this. We also have interviews with editor Tom Brevoort and writer Marv Wolfman. Dean Davis takes us back for a look at Marvel's war comics and much, much more.

Hang on, it's gonna be a wild ride.

I'm done.

Tim Tuohy

OOOPS!
In all the excitement of running our first Word Search game, yours truly forgot to print the answer to the Word Scramble on page 64 of last month's issue. Well, here it is:

It's a jungle out there.

MARVEL VISION insights

Dear Insights,

I always hear people complaining about comics. They don't like a writer or an artist or the storytelling isn't as it should be. Why can't people just enjoy the comics like I do? If I would write you whenever I don't; like something you would probably hear from me every week in different comics. But I don't, I just wait and see what happens with new stories and new writers because I have faith in what you do because I know you enjoy what you do.

For example I'm a big Tom DeFalco fan, so I was devastated when I heard he wasn't going to do the Fantastic Four anymore because he brought the series to a new height and it was one of the best runs ever. This doesn't mean I won't read the FF anymore. It's going to be a whole new ball game but it's still the Fantastic Four. People don't know what they are missing until it's gone. After their deaths, people were asking for Captain Marvel and Warlock. After it was canceled people asked for Alpha Flight, New Warriors etc. and while a series is running they don't pay attention to it. Another thing, sometimes you depend too much on our opinions. I think the people involved should have the freedom to cut loose and explore ways they want to try, even if we don't like it all the time (I know sales). I mean look at some of the STRANGE TALES from the '70s. They were stories going in the weirdest directions but people now pay big bucks for these comics because they are considered to be hot like the WARLOCK series by Jim Starlin for instance. Well, this was just my humble opinion. I won't force it up on anybody because I will enjoy Marvel comics anyway (they're still number one for me) even if there's no New Warriors, because now we have the THUNDERBOLTS, HEROES FOR HIRE, KA-ZAR, and, best of all, George Pérez back on the AVENGERS (Wow).

Erik Kruijskamp
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NETHERLANDS

Thank you for a little bit of good advice, Erik. Sometimes it gets pretty depressing reading letter upon letter citing something wrong with something we do. VISION once received a letter letting me know about one typo. I'm being completely serious. This person took the time out to sit down, write a letter, address an envelope, put a stamp on it and mail it off, just to cite one typo. Frankly, I found four in that issue. My point is that today's fans seem more quick to put pen to paper when they notice a mistake than when they enjoy something. Why?

To Tim ,

How come there was so much trouble finding out who was the clone in the Spider titles? All they had to do is look for fillings!!

Dwayne Kirkwood
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Where's an orthodontist when you need one?

Dear Tim,

I have had a few days off recovering from the flu, and to pass the time, I picked up a bundle of comics. My main observation is that Marvel is getting back to its roots. I feel that about a decade ago you lost your way and forgot that comics are meant to be fun.

I have heard it said that comics must change to combat the challenge from video games, etc. I disagree. What makes comics great is the ability to get inside a character's psyche. You can't do that with a computer game. I get a real nostalgic feeling about characters like Werewolf by Night returning. One request: more cosmic comics a la Captain Marvel, Quasar, Silver Surfer, please.

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It does seem weird that, if we take Matthew's point of time, a decade ago, comics did seem to lose a sense of fun. I'm not sure just what it was. Maybe some creators started to take themselves too seriously and that led to them taking their comics too seriously.

One of comics' most influential creators, Frank Miller, never lost his sense of humor when he was working on DAREDEVIL. Yes, they were very dark and moody stories that he told and yes, they were defining moments in the characters history, but Frank continued to have fun with the character. Just check out an upcoming Marvel's Silliest Moments for what I mean.

I remember an incident that occurred in the past: a former Executive Editor at Marvel had gone through UNCANNY X-MEN #139 and pointed out all of the things he thought were wrong with the issue. One thing he pointed to was Nightcrawler's quite humorous reaction to his first encounter with Alpha Flight member Snowbird. Sure, it was silly, but it was a nice moment, a fun moment.

Over in HEROES FOR HIRE, editor Mark Bernardo and writer John Ostrander resumed

the battle between Luke Cage and the dreaded soda machine. We're going to bring back fun in comics, count on it.

Dear Insights,

First, I would like to begin by congratulating you on a fine magazine that never ceases to entertain and teach me about Mighty Marvel. However, I am not writing to gush about how good this mag is, but I am concerned about recent events taking place in Marvel's comic titles. Since you speak for Marvel in a public context, I must send these concerns to you.

I have been a longtime fan of the Marvel line of books. My collection consists of at least 3/4 Marvel books. When my cousin asked me what comics to buy her 10-year-old son, I told her several titles (all of them Marvel). The reason I gave Marvel such high praise for our next generation of readers was due to one fact alone (as most companies can tell a good story and draw well or they wouldn't be around): Marvel never allowed curse words (the s-word, the d-word, the a-word, etc.) into their books. Recently, I had to explain to the mother of our supposedly precious next generation of readers that Marvel had begun to allow mild profanity in their books as well. She was upset, and I am afraid that we may have lost yet another future reader of our beloved genre. I know that he hears those words at school and probably worse. I know that TV has placed them in their shows. However, this industry has gotten along fine without showing our lack of vocabulary. And, if we felt the overriding urge to show that aspect of a character (something I'm not opposed to), we replaced the words with "#$@%^". Those symbols allowed me to understand the character without reading his or her filth. Besides, how does cursing increase a story's readability for anyone?

I guess my beef is that we say that we need to attract new readers to our genre. I go out and do that, even taking him [my cousin's son] 3 hours away to a convention (try that with a 10-year-old and stay sane - it's not easy), and then the industry as a whole gives those very same readers' parents another reason not to pick up the books. I can't tell Marvel what to do; however I will not introduce children to books that contain words that I don't even like to read, and if I won't do it (someone who backs up their concern for the industry by getting new readers), then this industry will continue to age and alienate more and more people until finally, all we have is our collections. I hope that you consider my thoughts and give our industry a chance.

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I admit to be at a loss in regards to your letter, Warren. Marvel Comics continues to send all of its comics through the Comics Code Authority for approval. This body was created to monitor comic companies' products so they would be suitable for all ages. And its standards have hardly been changed since the early '50s.

If a questionable word gets into a book then believe me, it's by accident and not to offend or shock.

Also remember, as you said in your letter, he probably hears worse in the school yard. Now that's not an attempt at justification. What it is is a reminder that it's up to an adult to educate and teach a child what is right and what is wrong. If a child finds a word in a comic that you as an adult finds offensive, then tell the young reader that it is a bad word and bad people say it. That might sound like it's simplifying the matter but I think you might be surprised at the results.

Dear Insights,

I have been a loyal fan for almost fifteen years, and I have never been as excited about Marvel comics as I am now. With new titles such as KA- ZAR, DEADPOOL, THUNDERBOLTS, HEROES FOR HIRE, and MAVERICK, I feel the Marvel Age is still upon us. Now, I hate to sound like a whiner but YOU NEED MORE TITLES!! I have heard rumors about new regular books of DEFENDERS, DR. STRANGE, FURY, the MICRONAUTS, PUNISHER, and THOR. All I can say is, the more the merrier. These are great characters and, if given the same treatment as these other titles, will really inspire some great stories. Now I have some suggestions. I don't expect you to take these seriously, but here goes:

1) How about a third X-MEN title? Spider-Man has over five titles to his name, and he's only one character.
2) Bring back THE HANDBOOK TO THE MARVEL UNIVERSE. I would die for a series that would give a detailed bio of every Marvel character in the whole universe
3) This may sound lame but Darkhawk and Moon Knight belong in HEROES FOR HIRE. They are great characters that if given the chance would be great additions to the team.
4) I also feel the same about Black Widow joining the THUNDERBOLTS. Maybe as a leader?

All in all, I think these are good ideas, but I don't expect you to listen (but hey, seeing my name in print would be pretty cool!). Keep up the good work,

Brad Paul
brad32375@hotmail.com

Brad, we take everything seriously here in the VISION office. Just look at the editorial picture in issue #26; if that's not serious then I don't know what is. Seriously, (pun intended) we do listen to what

the fans have to say—just look at the Clone Saga. Now on to your question:

1) Another X-Title? Granted you did say X-Men and made a comparison to Spider-Man but that's really apples and oranges. Yes, Spider-Man has five books, but they are five books that cover different aspects of Spidey's life. The X-Men as a group comprise X-MEN, UNCANNY X-MEN, WOLVERINE, X-FACTOR, CABLE, MAVERICK, X-FORCE, and EXCALIBUR. That's 8 to 5 in favor of the X-Men.

2) Fellow editor Tom Brevoort and I have actually discussed this as a possibility so you never know.

3) Why don't you write HEROES FOR HIRE editor Mark Bernardo (Him again?) with those suggestions. I'm sure he'd love to hear from you.

4) I think it's safe to say that due to recent events, Black Widow will not be joining the Thunderbolts.

Dear Tim,

Nice to know that you respond to your e-mail. Thanks for telling me that Wesley will have a cameo in Star Trek/X-Men. He's a character that has a lot of potential. Until MJ and Peter's marriage is broken up by Norman Osborn... wait, I want that to happen.. All right, until Captain Kirk is revealed to be Jean-Luc Picard's father, Make Mine Marvel!

David Zea
(Address withheld by request)

Why did we print this letter? Because it's truly amazing what people will come up with before the "Make Mine Marvel!"

Mr. Tuohy,

Hey, a friend of mine told me that the e-mail I sent you a while back was printed in Marvel VISION #25. I haven't been able to find the issue myself yet, but I did want to let you know that I really appreciate that you chose to print my letter and offer a response.

By the way, I noticed your name in the credits of MEN IN BLACK: REDEMPTION. I love the MiB and really enjoyed the issue! I hope there will be some more Men in Black on the way from Marvel.

Matt Kuhns
mjkuhns@iastate.edu

There will be more Men in Black at Marvel in 1998. Lowell Cunningham (you know him, he's the guy that created the whole thing) and I are working on the next four-issue limited series featuring those two MiB guys, Jay and Kay.

And now a short public service announcement to our web fans.

The Jazma Comic Book Newsletter Productions website is now updated and located at a new URL address. You will find us at:

http://www.twmgrafix.com/jazma

Jazma CBNP Staff Members

Mr. Tuohy,

In a recent letter from a Dennis Keninger a club was discussed called the Organized Readers of Comics Associated. He spoke of their web site, but didn't give a web address for the club. Could you publish the address for this club or at least let me know what it is? I have used every search engine available & cannot seem to locate it.

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If anyone out there has the web address that he's looking for, you can send it to Kenneth via his e-mail.

Hey, Julio.

What?

It's like a little club here this month, don't you think?

Just get back to the letters you're late as it is.

Hey, who runs this book anyway?

Get back to work!

Grouch.

To the guy with VISIONs,

First off let me tell you how great Marvel VISION is and that you guys keep on top of all the cool and funny stuff that makes Marvel #1. Not an easy task. Second, the 25th issue was just spectacular. It had everything that a Marvel fan could want in an anniversary issue including a CD-ROM, and not even an increase in price. How do you do it?

The main focus of this letter deals with the CD that was included in #25. After hearing such good things about the Spidey Online Comic I couldn't wait to see it for myself and I must say I was impressed. It looks different from paper comics, yet still relates the feeling of one. I liked the interactivity of the main page--quite cool. And the uniqueness of it is awesome; never seen anything like it. No wonder it keeps winning awards from AOL fans! But herein lies the complaint: What about us poor folks who don't want to have to go through AOL to see the comic? I mean, it's a great comic and I would love to go to the Marvel Website and get it, but I can't because it's only on AOL Marvel. It seems like all the cool stuff is there, and the people on the web get virtually nothing. I'm not talking about putting a Spidey comic on both sites--that would kind of ruin the uniqueness of Marvel Online--but what I'm suggesting is to bring some of that interactivity from Marvel Online to the Marvel Website and spruce it up. Maybe even put an online comic up there. From what I've heard and seen, the Marvel Website is a dim shadow of Marvel Online, and that's kind of unfair because most Marvel fans have the web but not AOL. I think that if you asked a majority of people on the web if they would like this

idea, I think you would find that a lot of people do and it would increase the number of hits on the website. So do you think you could talk to anyone at Marvel and get them to liven up the Marvel website a bit?

Thanks for listening, and keep up the great work. Never lose that Marvel Vision!

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Actually for web-fans, at www.marvelzone.com there's not only online comics but games and VISION contents from previous issues.

Hey Mr. Tuohy,

I just wanted to take a few seconds to let you know how kinda miffed I am about the She-Hulk "Origin of the Species" installment that was published in Marvel Vision #26. In it, Pat Jankiewicz calls Image Comics' [specifically, Erik Larsen's] character She-Dragon a "She-Hulk imitator" and "the most offensive clone since Ben Reilly."

If an adult tried to convey a modicum of intelligence by NOT seeing a movie and then claiming that "it's terrible," based on assumptions made having seen the advertisements for the movie only - well, most of us would find said individual to be fairly dismissable and perhaps immature. Well, the same situation applies here - anyone who has ever read a single comic book featuring the She-Dragon would be able to tell you that she began as a bitingly satirical PARODY of the She-Hulk (In "The Savage Dragon vs. The Savage Megaton Man" #1, as a member of Johnny Redbeard's Nixed Men), and has since grown into a drastically different character than Jennifer Walters.

I would appreciate it if Jankiewicz's opinions (and his inaccurate facts surrounding the dates of John Byrne's run(s) of She-Hulk were published, amongst other things) could be...well...made following perhaps a bit more research? I hope that in sending this note to you, it could perhaps reach the correct parties...

At any rate, I've really been enjoying "Marvel Chronicles." Keep up the satisfactory work.

Evan Long
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Thanks for the message, Evan. I guess one man's "...bitingly satirical PARODY" of the She-Hulk is another man's "imitator."

Finally, if the "incorrect dates" that you are referring to is the reference made that "When John Byrne left the FF, he joined her...," well that was an oversight on my part as well. John was working on both books at the time.

Dear INSIGHTS,

One thing I wish Marvel would do is publish more comics based on the adventures of female heroes: Spider-Woman (take your pick which one), She-Hulk, Carol Danvers, Rogue, Dr. Reyes, Storm, Black Widow, and Crystal just to name a few.

I'm not talking about bad girl stuff. Good comic fun like the menfolk do. C'mon!

Stev71@aol.com

Me too.

Thanks for writing and e-mailing!

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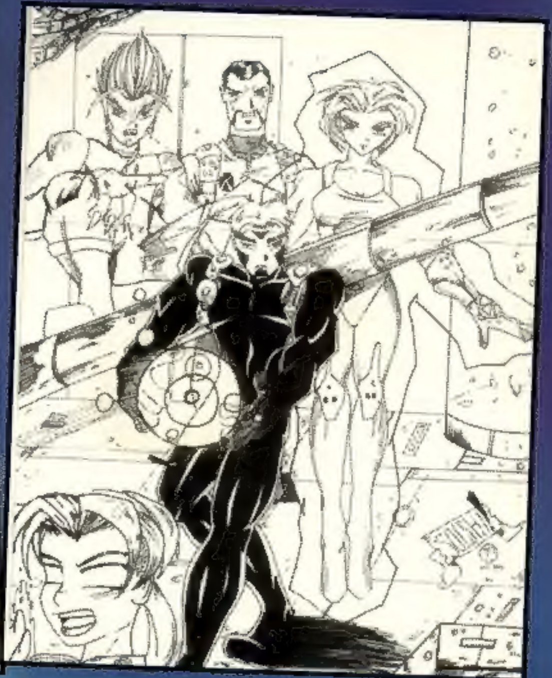
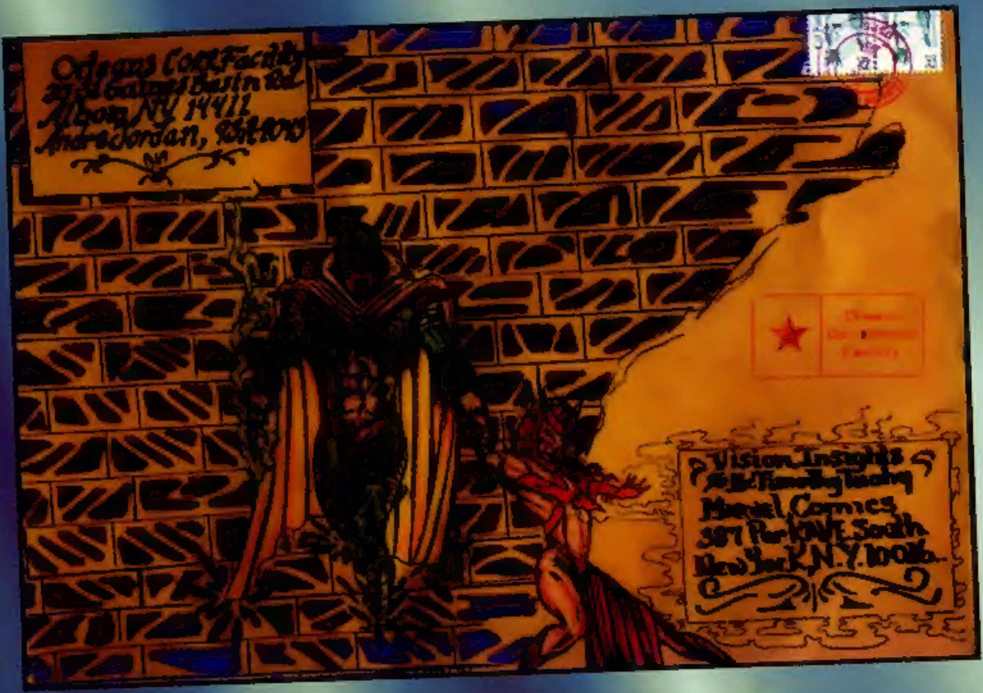
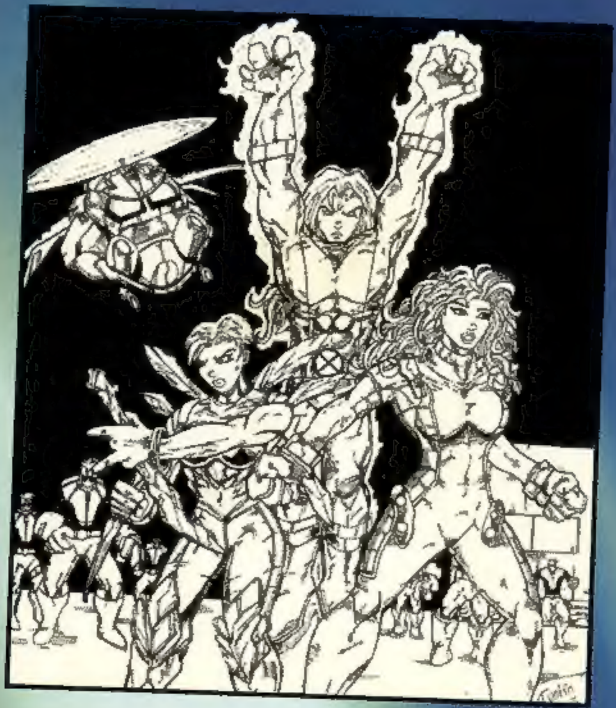






THE WAY THEY WERE

by Robert Piotrowski

Everything old shall be made new again. In an age of polyester pants and 'Footloose' attitudes, that little cliché couldn't be more accurate. Retro rules the 1990s! But, as all dedicated comic fans know, the magic of the past doesn't stop with raiding your parents' closet and grooving down to decade-old pop tunes. Any fan boy or girl worth their polymar bags knows the value of a retro-read. After all, before the Punisher there was the Two-Gun Kid, before Ka-Zar there was Tuk the Cave Boy, and before the Human Torch there was
. . . well, uhm . . . that other Human Torch. Yeah sure, but those heroes of old aren't as easy to get a hold of as your pop's platform boots. Titles from the Golden and Silver Age of comics are pricey. You'd have to save your nickels till you see your great-great-great-grandchildren to get a glance at the original Sub-Mariner or Captain America. That is, until now. As of April we've got one big advantage in the '90s that no other decade ever had—and its name is MARVEL UNIVERSE the series!

"This series will cover all the territory before FANTASTIC FOUR #1 (volume 1)," reports editor Tom Brevoort. "That basically means we get to play with everything from the dawn of time to the day before Reed and the others went up in the Pocket Rocket." Sweet! "It's an anthology series but when I say that I don't want people to automatically think it'll be a training ground for untried talent. That is not the case."

No guff! Writing these all-new blasts from the past will be superscribe Roger Stern (AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, SPIDER-MAN, FANTASTIC FOUR). As for the art, well, Steve Epting (X-FACTOR, THUNDERBOLTS FLASHBACK) is set to pencil the first three issues but after that it's anybody's call. And, unconventional as it may seem, that's one of the book's main attractions. Explains Brevoort: "The stories in MARVEL UNIVERSE will not necessarily be in chronological order and will be presented in self-contained arcs of anywhere from one to four issues. Each story line will feature an artist that is suitable to the style of the period presented so fans will get a chance to see all kinds of art.

"Our main goal is to present heavily character-oriented stories while fleshing out the entire Marvel Universe. People, no doubt, will want to pigeonhole it as a book about the World War II characters, or the 1950s heroes, but that's just a part of it. Also, readers may have the impression that this is going to be about people in suits and ties; it's not. For starters, there are characters like Vision, the Invaders, the Two-Gun Kid, the Eternals and Inhumans that we all know existed before FF#1. Then, there are other characters who are long-lived like Apocalypse and Wolverine as well as heroes like Doctor Strange who are part of an entire dynasty. So, for example, there is a possibility of doing a story about the Ancient One when he was an apprentice. On top of that, if somebody introduces a character next month that has lived for hundreds of years, we could play with that and explore his/her backstory. Roger seems to be having a blast connecting the various dots across the Marvel Universe and finding characters and relationships we haven't seen before. As a result, there's really no end to the potential for stories here. We could sit down and probably come up with three years of synopses for this book right now."

Writer Roger Stern is hip to that: "The Marvel Universe is incredibly vast. You've got sub-atomic microverses, the farthest reaches of space, ancient civilizations, alien planets,

and all these people have their own hopes and dreams and a story worth telling."

According to Brevoort, the only reason their voices can and will be heard is because of the consistency of the keenest fantasy universe this side of Asgard. "One of the things that separates Marvel from other comic book publishers is that we have a long publishing history. Marvel continuity has never been revised. Sixty years worth of storytelling brings a certain cohesiveness to the whole thing. Some people see that as baggage but I see it as a gold mine of story ideas. We're working to structure the book in such a way that the stories we present have a relevance to what is currently happening in Marvel's other monthly books."

So this is it—your chance to finally experience the wonder and glory of the Gold and Silver Ages of Comics: the adventure, the intrigue, the cheesy dialogue and campy sound effects?! Not likely. "While that's the period these stories take place in, this is going to be a series that's selling to readers in the '90s," claims Brevoort, "so the stories will be told in a modern style. It's not a question of drawing or writing like they did in the '40s. It's like the Indiana Jones movies. People go out and watch those and have a great time and the fact that they're set in the 1930's doesn't bother anybody. It's just the setting. This is not a comic about the time period, it's about the people who happen to live in it."

"We're not going to have a big caption that says 'meanwhile in a seemingly deserted warehouse on the outskirts of town' right above a picture of a seemingly deserted warehouse on the outskirts of town," adds Stern. "That type of stuff was kind of silly."

Nevertheless, Brevoort wants to reassure fans that the classic elements of these characters will not be messed with in the least. But don't be surprised if the Golden and Silver Age heroes seem a bit eccentric when compared to today's do-gooders. "In the case of the original Human Torch and the present Torch, the powers are identical but the personalities are completely different. Johnny Storm was, theoretically, a well adjusted teenager when he got his powers. It was the best thing that ever happened to him. However, the original Human Torch was a synthetic being that lived in a test tube. While he had electronically implanted knowledge of the world, he didn't necessarily have an emotional connection to it. As a result, these two could be in the exact same situation but react completely differently. The Namor of the '40s was a brash, impulsive, almost arrogant social activist. He was the kind of guy who would derail the L train and knock the top off the Chrysler Building to get people to listen to what he had to say. Today's Namor is a little more subtle and mature.

"Having said that, there was an appeal, on a certain level, to oddball characters of that time. In the '40s nobody had yet defined what made the super hero genre work. Nobody knew what the rules were. As a result, there were a number of heroes around that were just the most insane things. The Fin wore a two-foot fin on his head and had a sword that made him as strong as ten men. I mean, what a bizarre concept! Yet there's something appealing about him just for that reason. Those characters are fun just for their sheer outlandishness and if there's a reason for the Fin to appear in MARVEL UNIVERSE, he'll be there."

Sounds neat-o but what type of situation would call for the appearance of such wacky wonders of the wee years of comic book history? Well, whatever it might be, expect scribe Roger Stern to present it in the right context. Research comes with the territory when working on the very roots of the Marvel Universe and Roger wouldn't have it any other way. "I've done about two months of research already. Outside of the Marvel stuff which is always fun, I've been going over the timetables of history and giving the encyclopedia a good workout because some of this stuff happened around real history. As far as the actual comics go, every time I find what I'm looking for, I find something extra and it just keeps going and going. Mostly, I've been rereading old stories and asking why a certain character said a certain thing and what it meant. I don't really hold to a lot of hard and fast rules in storytelling but there are some basic

"If there's one phrase that exemplifies this series, it's that you can't tell where you're going if you can't tell where you've been." —Roger Stern

techniques I use. One is, if a hero said something that didn't make any sense, maybe he/she didn't know any better. But if a villain said something that didn't make any sense, he/she was probably lying. With this series I can go back and ask what really happened. By the same token, not everything needs to be explained. Telling the story comes first and if we can shed some light on the darker corners of the Marvel Universe while we're doing that, then all the better."

Surprisingly, Stern claims that, all things considered, he's been given quite a bit of creative freedom with the book. "Everyone's being very nice and entrusting me with this stuff. At the same time, I love the old Marvel stuff and certainly don't plan on contradicting any of it if I can help it."

Yet therein, if you've been paying attention, lies the most intriguing question of all. If they already know the outcome of most of these momentous events just from being well-read fans of current continuity, what else is there to tell readers? Well, if you want to be like that . . .

"It all plays on the same elements that allow you to read an issue of the FANTASTIC FOUR and think, 'Oh my God, the Mole Man has put them in an inescapable doom trap, I wonder if they'll survive!'" explains Brevoort. "Everybody knows they probably will because there'll be another issue of FF next month. So for the majority of readers, it's not a case of will they get out alive but how. This series will work with that."

Furthermore, knowing the final outcome of a confrontation could, in fact, be a great storytelling tool. "Since we know some of these characters' ultimate goals, we can use them as counterpoints. For example, we could do one heck of a Bucky story just working off the fact that everyone knows this kid gets blown to bits at the end of the war." Such irony could, without a doubt, add a bittersweet flavor to any action the character might make.

According to Stern, more often than not, there are a hundred questions for every answer provided in the lives of many of these early heroes. "Who was the Phantom Bullet? Who was the Silver Scorpion? Nobody knows. Why did she put on that costume and do what she did, and did it have some type of impact on today's heroes? Maybe there's someone running around the Marvel Universe today who is the great-great-grandson or granddaughter of some of these characters. Who knows? Up to this point, we've only seem glimpses of such things and there's a lot more!"

MARVEL UNIVERSE #1 cover, pencils by Carlos Pacheco.

Alright, let's leak out some details already. The first story arc will feature the Invaders (Cap, Sub-Mariner, and the original Human Torch) facing off against Baron Strucker. Look for some juicy tidbits on the founder of Hydra here. The second arc is set to star a series of classic monsters and the people who opposed them before there was a Fantastic Four to speak of. After that, the creative team will be relying on further inspiration as well as fan requests, so keep your bobby socks crossed and write in every other day (better make that twice a day for you Batroc ze Lepair diehards). And if you're not the writing-in type, just sit back and enjoy because according to editor Tom Brevoort, "What you're going to get in this one simple package is the scope of the largest, most long-lived, cohesive fantasy backdrop that's ever been created. It's a wonderful place." Even more so, no doubt, than your parents' closet.

"This series is about super hero characters before the modern age of super heroes."
—Tom Brevoort

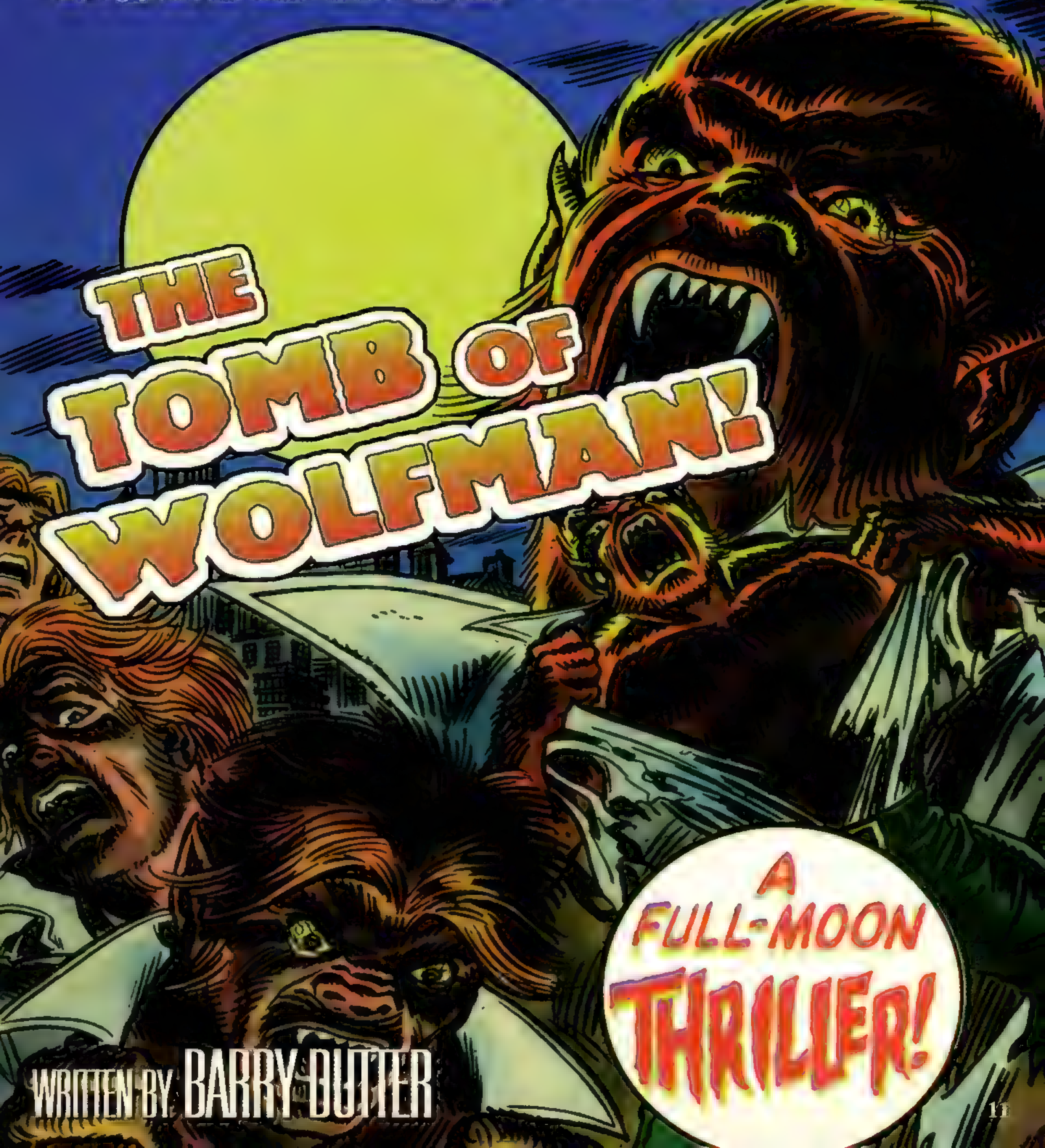
Isn't it ironic that a guy named Wolfman should win his greatest acclaim by writing a comic about Dracula? Marv Wolfman admits today that his scary surname was responsible for opening some monstrous doors for him at the beginning of his career.

"I think I got into horror writing because of my name. That certainly was a nice perk—it got me my very first credit. Roy (Thomas) picked me to write WEREWOLF BY NIGHT because of my name—and that's probably why I was offered TOMB OF DRACULA." Marv swears his last name really is Wolfman—and that the name is more common than you might think! Marv insists, "There are thousands of Wolfmans in the world, in every country, in every phonebook!"

For a guy who has written some of the most acclaimed horror stories in comics history, it is surprising to learn that Marv did not watch any scary movies as a child. He preferred to receive his thrills and chills from the printed page, rather than the screen. "I read the works of Poe and O. Henry, and then moved on to Shirley Jackson and Robert Bloch. I edited a horror fanzine. But I never saw horror movies. They were, frankly, too frightening. Horror films just made me ill."

As a child, Marv remembers seeing the early issues of FANTASTIC FOUR on the newsstands and ignoring them because "I thought the logo was so stupid! It looked like an Archie Comic!" Marv wised up and started collecting with FF #6, and quickly rounded up all the back issues for two cents apiece.

Having a letter published in a comic book led to Marv meeting Len Wein, who would also go on to become a comics



writer. Len and Marv used to take weekly tours of DC Comics, and got to know some of the DC editors. This led to the first published work of the teenage scribes, writing for DC's mystery comics.

"I was working for DC until '70, '71. Somehow I became an assistant editor over there. Then I went over to Warren, another publisher, where I was the editor of CREEPY, EERIE, and VAMPIRELLA." While Marv was editing those black-and-white horror titles for Warren, his old pal Roy Thomas asked him to take charge of Mighty Marvel's black-and-white line. At the time, the line consisted of about sixteen titles, each running 64 or more pages a month!

"It was an ungodly number of pages," Marv recalls. "There were as many pages per month as the color line!" Among the titles Marv edited were DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, DRACULA LIVES, SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, and CRAZY.

While overseeing the black-and-white titles, Marv was also doing some writing for the color line. "I was writing CAPTAIN MARVEL—very badly. I did not have an affinity for that character. DR. STRANGE became available. (Editor) Roy Thomas didn't want me to do DR. STRANGE. He wanted me to do DRACULA. I had no interest in DRACULA, but it was the only choice I had.

"I immediately read the novel and fell in love with it. I decided that my entire approach to the character would be base on the novel. In a way, it was good that I had never seen a Dracula movie, because I was able to be influenced by the creator, not by other people's interpretations of Dracula.

"The novel is not about Dracula; it's about the vampire-hunters. He plays a very minor role in the book. His effect runs throughout the entire story—he is a presence on every page he is not on—and that's pretty much the way I felt like handling the comic, as well. I like writing stories about people...and TOMB OF DRACULA allowed me to do that. It was about everybody but Dracula, and how the evil of Dracula affected them."

Marv entered the TOMB OF DRACULA with issue #7, joining artist Gene Colan for a run that would last more than 50 issues! TOMB OF DRACULA was one of Marvel's most acclaimed series of the '70s. It is the only horror title which lasted after all the other '70s monster books died out. It was turned into a Japanese animated film, which adapted the last two years of the series. It is also the source of the character Blade the Vampire Slayer, who will be starring in a big-budget feature film played by Wesley Snipes.

Marv attributes the success of TOMB OF DRACULA to the collaboration between himself and artist Gene Colan. "Gene is a master of faces—he draws the most expressive faces in the business—that freed me up from having to do a lot of rewriting. With some artists, you have to explain what's going on. I knew that he could draw sequences that no other artist could do. He could draw four pages of people talking and make it interesting.

"It's so hard for an artist to do several panels that are interesting, let alone several pages. Gene was able to pull that off, which allowed me to slow the pace of the book down an awful lot, and to do stories that were very character-driven...which none of the other Marvel monster books were...with the possible exception of Man-Thing."

Asked to name his favorite moments from TOD, Marv cited "the creation of Blade...Hannibal King...I loved the Chimera storyline...the whole 'Wedding of Dracula' storyline...and the last two years of the book were probably some of the strongest things I ever did for the title."

With his success on TOD, Marv was given the opportunity to launch a new series featuring Nova, a character that had been created by Marv as a teenager for one of his fanzines. Marv had a definite goal in mind with the NOVA series. "I wanted to prove that I could write super heroes. I was not getting any super hero work. I was doing humor and horror stuff. I decided to prove I could do it.

"I wanted to do a Spider-Man-like book...but not Spider-Man. I didn't want the hero to be that much of a loser. Even though I love (Spidey), I felt he was there already, and I wanted to do something original. And because I was a big DC fan, I wanted something a little more plot-oriented. Marvel is very character-oriented, so I wanted to combine the two approaches."

Since gritty realism was growing more popular in the '70s, Marv decided, "I wanted to do something fun and frivolous. I wanted to do stories that I enjoyed, with silly villains, like Diamondhead

The book lasted about two and a half years, and I had a ball doing it."

The success of NOVA gave Marv the chance to do some big-time super hero comics when Archie Goodwin offered him the writing chores on SPIDER-MAN and FANTASTIC FOUR. Marv found the FF a tough book to do, because, "with the exception of Ben Grimm, the characters are totally uninteresting. So you have to come up with phenomenal villains, but nobody has ever been able to beat Dr. Doom and Galactus. No one will ever be able to pull off that book as well as Stan Lee and Jack Kirby did."

Marv found SPIDER-MAN to be the type of super hero he most enjoyed writing. "SPIDER-MAN is an internal comic. It's about Peter Parker's life, and the things that are personal to him. The FF is an external book. It's not about the characters, it's about the situations they find themselves in. I found I have far more affinity for an internal type of story."

Among the high points of his career at Marvel, Marv said he is most proud that some of the characters he created are still around today, including the Black Cat, Bullseye, Nova, and Terrax.

Asked to name his most significant contributions to the Spidey mythos, Marv responded, "I graduated him from college—with the idea being that I would then always keep him in (graduate) school. All the readers were really pushing for him to grow up. This was a way for him to graduate and he could still be in college forever! It was a way of us having our cake and eating it, too!" Another favorite story for Marv was AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #200, in which Spidey finally confronted the burglar who killed his Uncle Ben.

Marv also had the distinction of writing prose novels featuring Spidey (MAYHEM IN MANHATTAN, with Len Wein) and the FF (DOOMSDAY!)—an experience he found not entirely satisfying. "I never felt (the Spidey book) was as good as it should have been. I had less than thirty days to write it. I had eight days to write the FF novel. We published the first drafts of both books! This was before computers! I would love to have the chance to write a novel where I could actually do some rewriting!"

Marv still has warm feelings for the old web-slinger. "He's just such a fun character to write. He's probably the only character, from the classic stable, that I would still be interested in writing."

In the late 1970s, Marv served as Editor In Chief of the entire Marvel line—a job he had mixed feelings about. "In the beginning, I loved it. Later on, I didn't like it. My job became more business than creative. At this point, I was in my mid- to late twenties, and I was not interested in business." As the job consumed more of his time, Marv lamented, "I had no time to (be) creative anymore."

Marv left the E-I-C job after one year, choosing to return to the creative life. But he boasts of one major accomplishment from his days as Chief. "The one year that I was (Editor In Chief) was the only year that Marvel did not ship any books late. That situation existed before I became editor, and returned after I left."

In the mid-'80s, Marv made the move to California. "I was going through some personal things at the time and I decided to get as far away from New York as possible. I never expected to get into TV. That came because I wrote an animated cartoon, and people liked it, so I kept writing more."

Comic book writer Steve Gerber, then a story editor on the "G.I. JOE" animated series, gave Marv his first TV assignment. That was followed by a stint as story editor on "TRANSFORMERS". Other shows Marv has worked on include "Robocop," "Reboot," and a show about a certain caped Kryptonian. Speaking about his TV work, Marv notes, "It's fun, but in many ways, I prefer the comic book form."

Currently, Marv is executive producer and co-creator of "Pocket Dragon Adventures," a syndicated series which will air 65 episodes beginning in September, 1998. In other animation news, Marv announced, "My partner and I have just gotten the rights to try to turn ELFQUEST into an animated series. It's a wonderful comic. I have been a fan of it since the very first issue."

Marv still keeps busy with a variety of comics projects. He recently wrote a Man-Thing story and a Dracula project for one of our competitors. Even after all these years, Marv is still eager to sink his teeth into more stories featuring the Lord of the Undead. "I would love to do Dracula again. But it would have to be with the right artist, and it would have to be a book that came from our hearts."

It seems that once you've been bitten by the vampire bug, you'll always be under Dracula's spell—even if your name is Wolfman!

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Weather
This afternoon unseasonably warm,highs near 50. Tonight mostly cloudy, with a chance of rain, lows in the mid 30's.

DAILY BUGLE®

IN THIS ISSUE
Excerpt from "Brightest Day, Darkest Hour," the new book by Shard, only in the Bugle.
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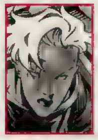


February 10, 1998 New York's Finest Daily Newspaper Fifty Cents

BIO-WEAPONS GO ON THE BLOCK

Heroes for Hire members, Powerman and Iron Fist, recently spotted with an unidentified individual

Staff Photo Chuck Giambalvo

Jan Parsec -BUGLE

Fear and concern struck an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council yesterday upon receiving news that a stockpile of biological weapons will be auctioned to the highest bidder. "We're very concerned," said one U.N. official. "The threat of biological weapons has always been a great one. In the wrong hands—I just shudder to think what might happen!"

Biological weapons returned to prominence in the headlines during the Gulf War when Iraq threatened to use such weaponry against the Allied forces. Biological weapons are considered one of the more heinous weapons of war. The effects of disease unleashed by a bio-bomb are widespread and painful, often affecting non-combatants.

While the various members of the U.N. have been debating a course of action, one super hero group appears to be taken a more offensive stance. Heroes for Hire, a team of super heroes with a shifting roster, recently appeared on the hero scene with a unique twist—you can actually pay them to work for you, for whatever services you require. Formed by the founders of the hired hero business, Iron First and Luke Cage, the team has of late taken on a variety of high-profile missions. While the team's membership is considered unstable (thereby an appropriate team can be formed for a given assignment), various known members of the hero community including the Black Knight and Ant-Man have been a part of the team. Members such as these lend Heroes for Hire credibility and offset initial public concern that they might be hired by individuals or organizations with a malicious intent. This image was almost instantly confirmed by an unsubstantiated report that a new team member will be the fugitive mercenary, Deadpool, who is still wanted for questioning in connection with an explosion at a research base in the Arctic Circle.

Calls to the Heroes for Hire main office were not returned, so we could not get definite confirmation that the team is indeed headed to Symkaria, as has been rumored, or who has hired them for this mission.

In an alarming development, Silver Sable, who heads a Symkarian-based, world-renowned hired hero organization herself, issued a statement to the United Nations warning that any outside interference in what she termed "a Symkarian internal matter" would be met by "high-powered, highly-trained resistance."

—Continued in HEROES FOR HIRE #10

LIFE BELOW GROUND ?

Secret tunnels below the city of Manhattan

Ben Urich -BUGLE STAFF

For years, there have been whispered rumors about life below ground, of a collection of social outcasts who have found refuge in the labyrinthine tunnels below the city of Manhattan. Tales have been woven by various individuals of a group of people unable to fit into and survive within society, secretly living in the darkest, dankest, and in some cases, oldest parts of this great metropolis. The homeless? Not quite. Try the homeless mutants.

"Mutants?" you might say with some alarm. Indeed. Like the Juggernaut or the X-Men, this group purported to be right beneath us are genetically different from you and me, some in appearance, others in fantastical abilities.

For years, these reports have come in—from fugitives on the run from the law, from thrill-seeking teenagers who got in over their heads. But for all those reports, police sweeps have never been able to confirm the existence of this subterranean colony. Chalk it up to the imagination, they'd say. And without any concrete evidence, they might have a point. Then again, they might not.

We live in a world of incredible marvels, where men and women can fly, lift cars over their heads, and fire heat vision at their sometimes equally impressive opponents. Oftentimes, New York City seems to be the center of this incredible and incredibly dangerous universe. Based on police and media reports, it's safe to say there is no higher concentration of super-powered beings anywhere else in the world. Which brings the possibility of our tunnel-dwelling friends to the realm of the feasible. Like the Morlocks in H.G. Wells' famous novel, "The Time Machine," they have lived away from the sun for years.

Perhaps one day they will join us, or at least provide evidence of their existence. Until then, we can only watch—and wait.

—Continued in X-MEN #74

ROBERTSON STEPS DOWN FROM BUGLE

Paper says goodbye to Pulitzer winner

Tom Amos-BUGLE

Joe Robertson, a long-standing member of the Daily Bugle staff, announced his resignation yesterday, ending a starry and storied career. Though he rose high up on the Daily Bugle hierarchy, Robertson will perhaps be best remembered for his illustrious tenure as City Editor. During that time, Joe Robertson brought an unprecedented degree of class and professionalism to the paper, winning numerous accolades and several Pulitzers.

Robertson, whose decision stunned the paper's staff, cited a desire to spend more time with his family as the motivation behind his decision. Bugle co-owner Norman Osborn promised that the door would always be open to Robertson if he wanted to return. In a written statement, longtime publisher J. Jonah Jameson, a close friend of Joe Robertson's, said that "a valued colleague, a master of the profession has retired from the craft. While it's true we'll all be poorer for his departure, the truth is, we're richer for what he gave us. Thank you, Joe."

—Continued in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #433

FIND YOUR SOUL MATE IN THE BUGLE!

Turn to page D-5 for the most complete personal ads in New York!

THE ART OF WAR... MARVEL STYLE!

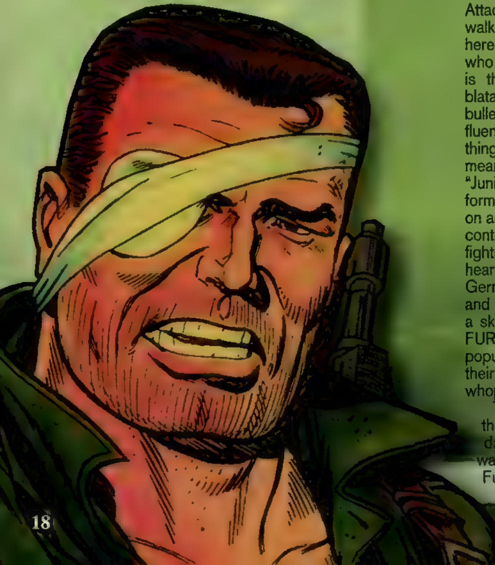
BY DEAN DAVIS

The next time you're perusing the new book shelves at your favorite comic shop, check around to see if you can find one featuring a WWII combat soldier. Chances are you aren't going to find any heroes wearing olive drab. When was the last time you read (or heard) a sound effect like "BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA" or "RATATATATAT"? Again, chances are the sound effects you see nowadays are a bit wimpier like "thwip" and "snikt".

Adventures that our fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers actually lived are now basically given as history homework in school or seen as documentaries on the Discovery Channel. There was a time, though, when Marvel was home to the biggest buncha of yahoos ever to sling a tommy gun.

ACTION-PACKED ANTHOLOGIES

During the Korean "conflict" comic companies began to publish war titles that had a heavy push towards realism. EC Comics pioneered the genre while Atlas (Marvel), Charlton, and DC produced their own versions. Most of the stories were six to eight pages long. One of Atlas' regular characters was Combat Casey. He was known as "The Fighting Infantry's Red-Bearded Riot." This wild Irishman starred in his own stories, both in WWII and Korea, and narrated other historically based tales in his book.



WITH A CRY OF "WA-HOO!"

Long before Matt Murdock was even born, Hell's Kitchen in New York City already had raised a hero. Nicholas Joseph Fury was the oldest of three children born to Jack Fury, an American pilot who died in WWI. Jack's love of aviation was not lost in the genes of his son, but manifested itself in a different way. As a wingwalker, Nick would do spectacular feats of daring-do and parachuting with his pilot and best friend, Red Hargrove. They toured the country as part of Finley's Flyin' Circus. As England declared war against the Axis Powers, Nick and Red were employed by the British Army as jump instructors. That's where Nick also met for the first time then Lieutenant Samuel "Happy Sam" Sawyer. The two men would share a long history together.

Orders came down that some vital papers were to be picked up from a British agent in Holland. Fury, Hargrove, and Sawyer volunteered for the job. After flying to the land of tulips they tried to meet up with their man. Their plane crash-landed as a result of crippling bullet holes from a previous scrap with a German ship. While still searching for the agent, they came across a circus train. It's here they met strongman Timothy Aloysius Cadwallader "Dum Dum" Dugan. With the German Army coming down the road after them, Dum Dum joined the group. They eventually found the agent and the papers.

Upon returning stateside, Nick and Red joined the Army and were stationed at Pearl Harbor just in time to witness "the day that will live in infamy." Red was killed in the surprise attack and Fury lost the first in a long line of friends to this bloody war. He was then transferred to a commando unit organized by Captain Sam Sawyer.

Officially known to G-2 (Military Intelligence) as the First Attack Squad, this collection of super-soldiers came from all walks of life. We already know about Fury and Dum Dum, so here's the rest of the guys: Reb Ralston, the Southern gent who gave the Howlers their patented "WA-HOO!" yell, which is the reason behind their nickname. Dino Manelli was blatantly modeled after Dean Martin and had more chicks than bullets. Dino's best weapon was knowing German and Italian fluently. Izzy Cohen was an ace mechanic who could fix everything from a can opener to a tank. Gabriel Jones played a mean trumpet and an even meaner machine gun. Jonathan "Junior" Juniper was an Ivy League college boy who was a former tail gunner on a B-17. Unfortunately, Junior was killed on an early mission. Percival "Pinky" Pinkerton was England's contribution to the Howlers. Pinky was a great close-quarters fighter because of the way he swung his deadly umbrella. You heard me right...I said umbrella. Another later addition was German-born Eric Koenig. Eric did not believe in Hitler's quest and fought with the Allies to save his homeland. He was also a skilled pilot and came onboard after Dino got hurt. SGT. FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS were very popular in the Sixties. As a matter of fact, Marvel offered fans their own full color Howlers T-shirt by mail. The price was a whopping $1.50!

The greatest loss Nick Fury suffered during the war was the death of his beloved Lady Pamela Hawley, who was the daughter of an English nobleman. Her tender personality was completely opposite to that of the loudmouthed, brawling Fury's. She was a nurse in London during the heaviest bombing. Nick wanted to marry her and even carried around a diamond ring on one mission. As he rushed to London to propose, her father told him the tragic news that she had been killed. Pamela was his one true love and he never got over it.

When Marvel Maniacs saw Nick sporting an eyepatch in NICK FURY: AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D., they wanted to know the reason behind it. Issue #27 of SGT. FURY gave them the answer. While in combat a German grenade was thrown at Nick's feet. He quickly picked it up and saved his men by throwing the explosive back to whence it came. The resulting blast caused the eye injury. It was recommended that Fury undergo surgery to correct the eye, but he refused because it would take him out of action for too long. His vision in that eye deteriorated enough in the following years to warrant the patch.

As a result of their stellar record, the Howling Commandos were asked by the government to participate in secret missions during Korea and even Viet Nam. King-Size Special #3 features the Viet Nam story as well as what careers the Howlers had in 1960s civilian life. The back portion of the issue is devoted to pin-ups and bios. The Howling Commandos debuted in 1963 with their own title and it ran for 167 issues (until 1981). The later years featured stories that were simply reprints from their glory days.

THOSE ROWDY RAIDERS

Five years after the debut of Sgt. Fury's mag Marvel introduced another war team book. CAPTAIN SAVAGE AND HIS LEATHERNECK RAIDERS stormed onto a northern beach of Tarawa on Nov. 22, 1943, two days after the initial wave of Marines. Their mission was to destroy the main Japanese ammo dump. As a caption on the splash page put it, "On their shoulders rests the difference between victory and defeat!" After accomplishing the assignment the first issue ends with a quick cameo appearance by Sgt. Fury and the Howlers.

The six-man team was fronted by Capt. Simon Savage, a naval officer with a leadership flair that rivaled that of Nick Fury's. Savage's team was just as diverse as that of the Howling Commandos. Sgt. Yaketty Yates knew he wanted to be a Marine since the day he first learned to salute his teddy bear. Cpl. Jacques LaRocque was the playboy of the Raiders. He spoke with a thick French accent which he used to spit out almost every bad cliché. All this guy thought about was picking up babes, or babes picking him up. Pvt. Jay Little Bear was a champion wrestler before the war. The man with the mohawk could handle a bow and arrow comparably to the Avengers' own Hawkeye. Pvt. Lee Baker was a Los Angeles schoolteacher before enlisting and was killed after saving his teammates in issue #11. Seaman Blarney Stone was the cook, the medic, and a handy safecracker.

Capt. Savage and his Raiders left their mark on the Marvel Universe with issues #2-4. Baron Wolfgang von Strucker, Fury's main nemesis, was forced to flee Germany in SGT. FURY #29 after facing a few defeats from Nick and the boys. He feared Hitler's punishment and retreated with the aid of what he called the "Japanese underground." That cabal turned out to be the beginnings of HYDRA! He soon found himself on their island in the Pacific. This storyline featured one of the first chronological appearances of HYDRA in the Marvel continuity.

Savage and the Raiders were sent to the island to follow up on reports of a mysterious submarine. On the other side of the ocean a Japanese commando team called the Samurai Squad was sent on the same mission by their leaders. Both groups were easily captured except for Savage and the Samurai leader named Morita. Strucker shot off his mouth most of the time about his world domination plans. Savage and Morita fought each other first, then turned their attention toward HYDRA when they figured out the whole scheme. Meanwhile, the Raiders and Samurais did pretty much the same scenario in HYDRA's underground hideout. Everything blew up in the end and both teams earned a mutual respect for each other as they headed back toward their own bases.

Around the middle of the series a few distinctive changes occurred. Simon Savage shaved off his beard and moustache. The entire squad also hung up their khaki uniforms and adopted the combat green look. Most notably, the title of the book was changed to CAPTAIN SAVAGE AND HIS BATTLEFIELD RAIDERS. After nineteen issues, though, The Raiders were given an Honorable Discharge from Marvel's lineup.

12 GUYS + 1 PANEL = TIGHT SQUEEZE!

Combat Kelly was a continuing character in the early '50s. In

1972, a revamped Combat Kelly reentered the war and this time had twelve good men backing him up. Okay, eleven good men and one woman. This gang of convicts had an origin that was similar in content to a war movie classic called "The Dirty Dozen." On the other hand, Combat Kelly was not the basis for the war movie "Kelly's Heroes," or for that matter, "Hogan's Heroes," which wasn't a movie, but it was a TV show. Confused yet?

Dum Dum Dugan, Dino Manelli, and Pinky Pinkerton were responsible for taking this band of misfits and honing them into a fighting machine. After a successful first mission, Dum Dum was transferred back to the Howlers while Dino and Pinky stayed. Combat Kelly was brought in as the new leader.

Kelly was a prizefighter from Boston. He was on his way toward winning the title when he got drafted. While in the Army he accidently killed a man in a rigged boxing match and was thrown in prison. The brass thought that a tough guy of this magnitude shouldn't be rotting in a cell. He was soon introduced to his charges.

Let's quickly run through the lineup of the Deadly Dozen. There were Dino, Pinky, Hillbilly Wagner, Jake Jensen, Howard Shigeta, Snake-Eye Simpson, Donald Sample, Bullseye Miller, Ace Hamilton, Doc Watson, Laurie Livingston, and Jay Little Bear. As you remember, Jay was originally a Raider under the command of Capt. Savage. It's never fully explained why he was in jail and what happened to the rest of the Raiders. He just said he got a "bum rap" and the matter was dropped. Dino and Pinky hung around for awhile before returning to the Howlers. They were mainly there as a couple of recognizable names for the readers until they got used to the new crop of characters. Unfortunately, that never quite happened and the Dozen were cancelled before they even reached their nickname. Issue #9 wrapped up the series.

WHAT'S A HELMET, SIR?

Comics isn't the best medium to feature stories around a team of guys who are all dressed the same. You can't hear their voices so you have to rely heavily on the visuals to tell them apart. One way an artist achieves this is to have each member either not wear a helmet, so you could see his face, or wear a unique headpiece.

The most recognizable of these was Dum Dum's derby and Pinky's beret. Reb wore a variety of hats and eventually settled on a wide-brimmed safari type. Dino wore something called an envelope cap whenever the mood struck him. Gabe wore a wool hat, but not as cool as the one Michael Nesmith of the Monkees had. Yaketty Yates was never without his Marine campaign hat while Blarney seemed to have his sailor cap glued to his head. Even though Bullseye Miller looked like he had a helmet on, it was really an afro the size of a beach ball.

For the most part though, a majority went straight into combat with no melon protection at all! Either they secretly knew that nobody stays dead in the Marvel Universe or they liked the feel of bullets whistling through their hair. Izzy Cohen seemed to be the only one with brains and he intended to keep them by wearing his helmet. He must have had a private talk on the merits of wearing a steel bonnet with Simon Savage. The good captain tossed the officer's cap and started donning a helmet in the later issues of his series. Fury liked to keep one strapped on his back for those moments when the action got so hot he could light his cigar off the blasts from the shelling.

THE KEYSTONE COMMANDER

The dictionary defines the word keystone as "the central supporting element of a whole." That definition is perfect for General Samuel "Happy Sam" Sawyer. It was Red Hargrove, Fury's flying buddy, who gave Sam his nickname. It was Fury though who had Sam yelling, "Stop calling me Happy!" more times than Perry White bellowed, "Don't call me Chief!" to Jimmy Olsen.

The stoic officer had a huge hand in assembling The Howling Commandos, The Leatherneck Raiders, The Deadly Dozen, and The Maulers. This last team was led by Sgt. "Bull" McGiveney and Cpl. Ricketts Johnson in the pages of SGT. FURY. Sawyer knew how to choose a proper squad leader and proved it with Fury and Kelly. His brilliance as a military strategist allowed him to quickly rise in rank. After the war he commanded the armed forces that helped Thor defeat Loki's invasion of Washington, D.C.

While attending a Howlers reunion with Captain America, "Happy Sam" was kidnapped by a Baron von Strucker robot that was bent on taking over the world, of course! After valiantly fighting HYDRA alongside Cap and his former comrades in arms, General Sawyer paid the ultimate price by dying while destroying the robot and saving his friends. He was buried with full honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

THE TEAM BEHIND THE TEAMS

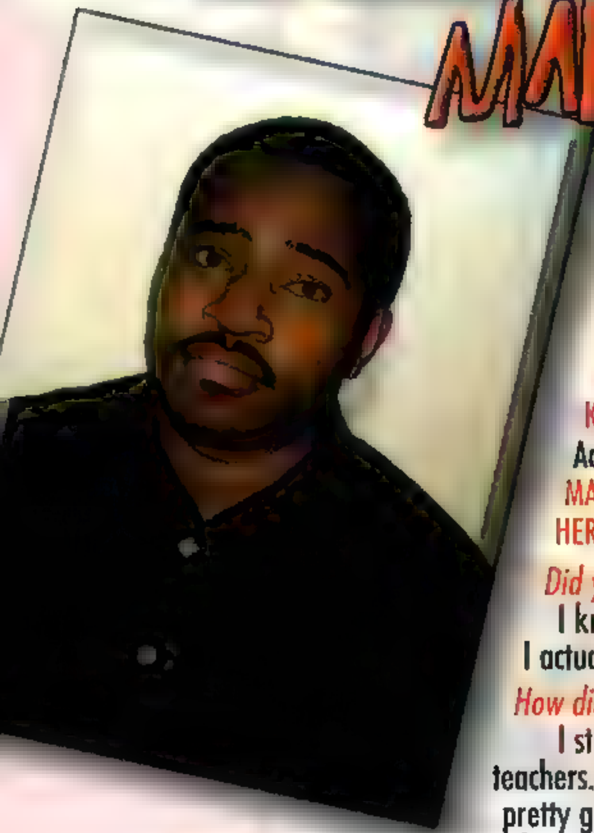
Just as every commando unit crossed over into each other's titles and then got reacquainted again in a future storyline, so did the art teams of Marvel's war books. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby created and nurtured Sgt. Fury before handing it over to Roy Thomas and one of the great Silver Age artists, Dick Ayers. 99.9% of the books I just spent the last three pages writing about were drawn by Dick Ayers. A good majority of those scripts were typed by the talented fingers of Gary Friedrich. Inking was handled by a competent bunch including such names as Syd Shores, Mike Esposito, and the master of war comic book art, John Severin.

—Dean Davis (Thanks to Bill Broomall, Peter Sanderson, and Chuck at "Legends" in Plymouth Meeting, PA for their unending and invaluable help. It's greatly appreciated.)

THUNDERBOLT
ANOTHER MINI MARVEL BY RIBS
10¢
NGNGG NGNGG
WAH!
GRR... WHAT IS IT?! OF COURSE THIS IS GENERAL ROSS! WHAT DID YOU... WHAT?!?
SEND ME MY DING-DONG JEEP!!
SECONDS LATER
SIR!
FACE FRONT, MAJOR! DE-BRIEF ME!!
WELL, SIR, LIKE I SAID ON THE PHONE: THE X-9 ROCKET HAS BEEN STOLEN BY UNIDENTIFIED AGENTS!
YOU BUNGLING MORONS!!! SO BLAST THOSE LOUSY REDS OUT OF THE SKY!!!
BUT SIR...!
LOOK! THEY'RE ALREADY OUT OF RANGE!!
NUTS!!! NOW WE'LL NEVER WIN THAT BLAMED SPACE-RACE!!
GENERAL ROSS! LOOK NOW!! SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH THE X-9!
?!
SHE'S GOING DOWN!
WHERE?!
SHE'S DOWN!!
WHERE!?!
HOBOKEN, SIR!!
WHERE'S MY DING-BUSTED JEEP?!
WELL, WELL
WHAT IN BLAZES!?
!?
RICHARDS!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH MY DAD-BLASTED ROCKET?!
THERE WAS NO TIME FOR OFFICIAL CLEARANCE...
IT WAS THOSE LOUSY COSMIC RAYS!!
AW, NUTS!!
UM... SIR?
HEY, SIS! LOOK AT ME!!
SIS?
GENERAL ROSS? WE'RE DUE AT THE GAMMA-BOMB TEST SITE THIS MORNING
BAH! THAT BLAMED DR. BANNER'S A GUTLESS MILKSOP!! HE WOULDN'T START WITHOUT ME THERE!
NO HARD FEELINGS, EH?
end

SHOWCASING THE UNIQUE TALENTS WHO HAVE HELPED THE HOUSE OF IDEAS DOMINATE THE COURT, IT'S...

MARVEL'S UNSUNG HEROES



REAL NAME: Mark Morales
DATE OF BIRTH: 10/30/69
OCCUPATION: Inker (currently on X-FORCE)
FIRST APPEARED IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE: inking X-FORCE #49
BASE OF OPERATIONS: New York
DUAL IDENTITIES: couch potato, video game fanatic and big New York Knicks fan
KNOWN CONFIDANTS: Joe Rubinstein, Pat Sapini, Nelson DeCastro, Rob Stull, Adam Pollina (co-workers & friends) and the many members of his immediate family
MAJOR ENEMIES: The Chicago Bulls
HERO STATUS VERIFICATION: Has been contributing to the X-line for over 2 years

Did you always know you wanted to work in comics?
I knew I wanted to work in art from an early age but I wasn't sure where. Either comics or animation. I actually ended up doing both so that worked out well.

How did you break into comics?
I studied visual arts in school and my first professional job was assisting Will Eisner, one of my teachers. He was re-working an old 'Spirit' story. My job was to re-ink the pages and I thought I did a pretty good job. Then I got into animation for a year and hated the repetitive nature of the work. After that I assisted Joe Rubinstein on background inks for about a year and broke in from there by showing my stuff around.

What made you choose inking over penciling?
I'm a much faster inker.

What's the secret to your success?
A lot of hard work and practice. Also, I try to be very precise and make each page look as good as possible before I send it off. It usually takes me 10 to 11 hours to do one page. That's pretty slow compared to other inkers.

Is being a successful comic book inker everything you thought it would be?
Pretty much. Except for the long hours and deadlines.

What is your greatest accomplishment outside of comics?
I'm still working on that one.

If you weren't inking, what would you be doing?
Writing, drawing, and/or painting children's books. That was my original plan when I got out of school and it's something I still hope to do in the future.

Finish this sentence: "If I could do it all over again, I'd definitely . . ."
. . . do it exactly the same way. I wouldn't change a thing.

If they were making a major motion picture of the Marvel Universe, which character would you be cast as?
I think it'd have to be Blade the Vampire Slayer because he looks so cool. I love those glasses! Also, I'm a big fan of the "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" TV series.

Do you work at home or in a studio?
At home in front of the television like a zombie.

If you could only watch one TV show for the rest of your career, what would it be?
Right now I'd have to say "South Park." It's pretty sick.

Finish this sentence: "I absolutely can't get to work until . . ."
. . . I get 8 hours sleep. I keep pretty strict hours, usually working from noon until midnight every day.

What Marvel comics do you currently read?
THUNDERBOLTS is a great book. I also like DEADPOOL, CABLE, X-MEN, KA-ZAR and X-FORCE of course. Even though I ink the book I usually don't get sent a script. I can sort of tell what's happening from the pencils, but John Francis Moore is a good writer and I like going through it to get the dialogue once it's all done.

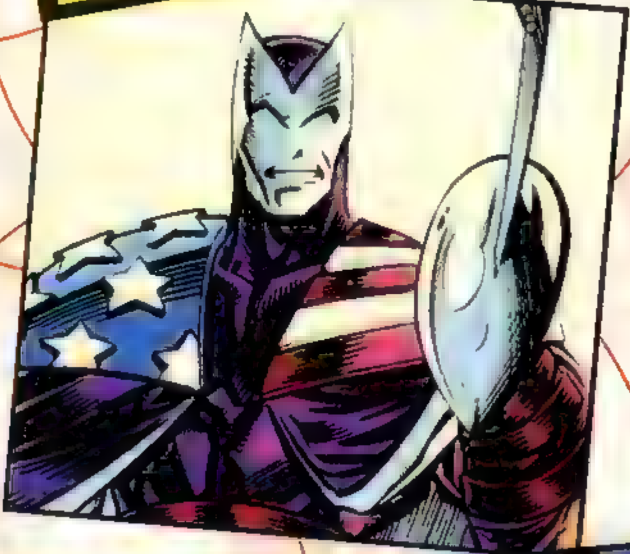
Did you make a New Year's resolution?
No. I never make New Year's resolutions because I always end up breaking them. This way it's a lot easier.

Who are your heroes?
My parents.

—Robert Piotrowski

BREVOORT'S BAG O' FUN

By Bryan Cairns



In a twisted intergalactic comic book trivia pursuit game, the fate of the Earth is once again in jeopardy. Your opponents are (gulp!) Dr. Doom and the Leader, two of Marvel's reigning brainiacs. The prize: that planet we call home. Now you too must choose a partner worthy of this challenge but the question is who? Reed Richards? Hank Pym? Bruce Banner? Hey, this isn't the minor leagues, this is for the whole enchilada! Ultimately, there is only one choice: Marvel editor Tom Brevoort whose trivia prowess is legendary. Obi-Wan-Brevoort, you could be our only hope. Just to make sure though, let's get the lowdown on him beginning with how he garnered such a Mr. Know-It-All reputation.

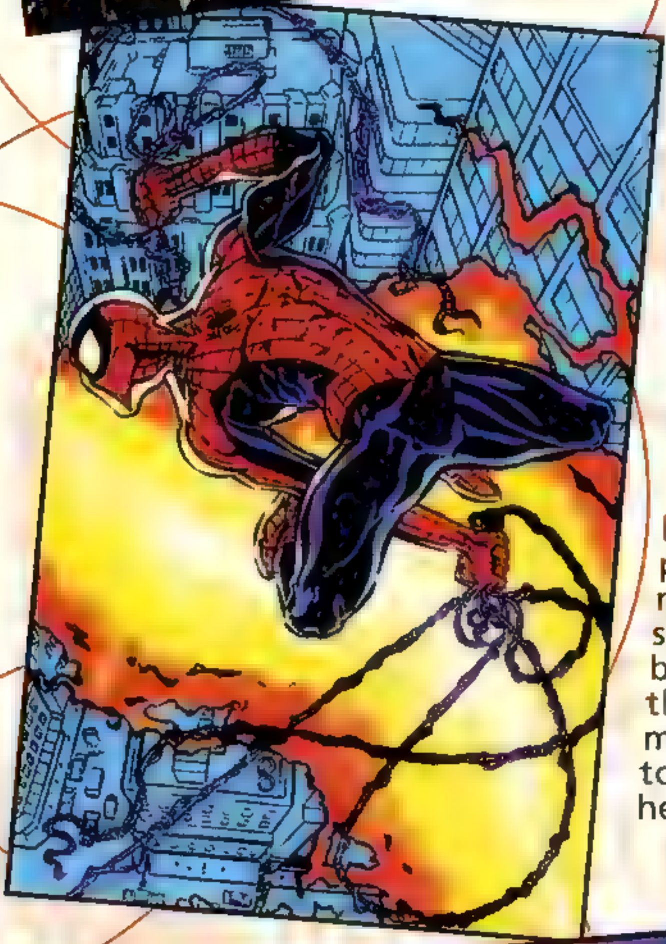
"That's because I do," laughs Brevoort. "To be fair, I don't remember everything but I do remember a lot. The real secret is the further I go back, the better I remember it. The books I read in my single digits and teens, all that stuff, I remember well. I was quite a comic book buff then."

And maybe even more so now. Currently editing such popular titles as THUNDERBOLTS, GHOST RIDER, MARVEL TEAM-UP, VENOM: FINALE, and the upcoming AVENGERS, Brevoort guesses his comic library consists of more than 90 boxes, not including trade paperbacks, hardcovers and collections. Just as amazing, he reads almost every title out there now. So what exactly do editors do all day then? Flip through comic books?

"The analogy I use is it's kinda like being a combination of the coach and manager of a sports team," he explains. "I get to pick the players and who plays. I can tell them what plays to make, what storylines to do. I can change the team costumes; I can take people out of the game and call a time-out. I don't actively write or draw the book myself, yet I have input into every stage. I hire the people and they do the work up to my specifications. I'm sort of a combination guru, guiding light, traffic patrol, bad older brother and wisdom father figure for everyone who works on the title."

It certainly seems like the main man knows his stuff and why shouldn't he? His fascination with comics began at the early age of six when his father bought him his first one at a Long Island 7-11. With vivid detail, he still recalls the experience that would mold his future. "There was a rack near the door. I was sort of attracted to it enough so that even beyond the book I purchased at the time, I can still tell you other books on the shelf. So my Dad bought me SUPERMAN #268."

Later in grade school, Brevoort continued his indulgences by writing and drawing his own comics, which he teases "were pretty crude and pretty bad, much as my comics are today." The enthusiast even studied the Marvel indexes to satisfy his cravings. He continued his education in illustration through high school and eventually attended the University of Delaware where he was introduced to Marvel's internship program. During the summer of '89, Brevoort interned for three offices under Bob Budiansky, Greg Wright and Craig Anderson. Much like today's interns, Brevoort got his feet wet by performing various tasks including paste-up, production, running errands, and becoming involved in special projects and licensed products. Oh and lest we forget, the occasional mishap.



"I remember putting a hole in a perfectly good Kevin Maguire Captain America," confesses Brevoort. "I don't know if they even found out that was me."

Until now, that is.

However, all the hard work paid off and in December of '89, he was hired on as an assistant editor. A year later, he was promoted to managing editor (at present time, that position is now called associate editor) which led to a full editor position somewhere around the end of 1993. If you skim through your back issues, readers can catch his first editorial credit on the DEATHLOK series. Even with all the characters he has managed to guide through the last few years, his dream book to work on is still FANTASTIC FOUR while his favorite super hero remains the FLASH.

In the meantime, Brevoort will have to be satisfied with his impressive roster of duties. Grounded in the oldies but goodies, Brevoort admits, "I've been striving to get my grubby little mitts on some of the classic Marvel books for years." Well, the wait is over thanks to the Heroes Return quartet consisting of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, IRON MAN, THE AVENGERS AND CAPTAIN AMERICA. Brevoort is thrilled to be involved, calling these characters "the mainstays of the Marvel Universe, the linchpins and the cornerstones. Without them, you wouldn't have the Marvel Universe we know and love today."

Originally slated to edit IRON MAN, Brevoort approached editor-in-chief Bob Harras requesting to do either both IRON MAN and THE AVENGERS or just THE AVENGERS. Despite having hashed out the armor clad hero's creative team and having had a hand in designing the new suit, Brevoort grew up reading Earth's Mightiest Heroes. After a bit of deliberation, Harras gave Brevoort the key to the Avengers' vault. So it's no surprise if forced to reduce his work-

load to one project, he would keep THE AVENGERS.

"It's the core classic Marvel characters, done as they were meant to be done by the best creative forces in comics," explains proud papa Brevoort about his new baby. "I'm working with George Pérez who drew some of the earliest Marvel books I read, and to my mind is the greatest living comic book artist. I'm also working with writer Kurt Busiek which is always a lot of fun."

What makes a good story, though? We already have a top-notch writer and artist. It's got to be those splash pages or when a hero tragically sacrifices themselves or better yet, when a long dead character resurfaces on the last page. Sorry, what did you say, Tom? I'm wrong?

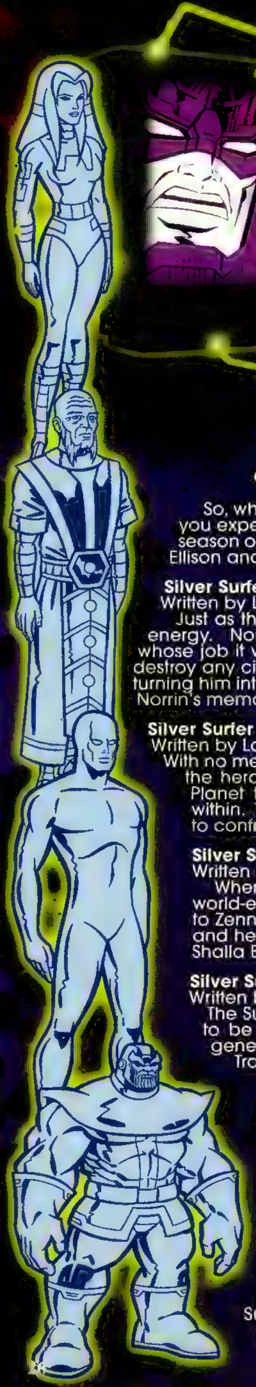
"Big fist fights!" he jokingly offers before revealing his required elements. "I think a good story tells about the characters involved which in turn tells something about yourself. If the story is told well, you can easily get into the lives of the characters, become absorbed in their situations, not knowing where things are gonna go, how things are going to turn out. All these things sort of factor in. It's kind of hard to put my finger on it because I like a wide range and variety of comics. The things I think make a good Golden Age Marvel story do not necessarily make a good GHOST RIDER one. It's being true to the character and concept."

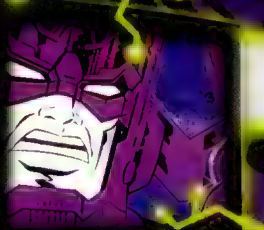
Okay, so he's qualified. Alex, Comics for $500 please. But can he handle the heat? Will he buckle under the pressure during our battle of the minds? After all, what's the worst part about being an editor?

"Oh, there's so much to choose from," chuckles Brevoort. "Probably the worst part is just getting everything in on schedule. There are a lot of people out there capable of great, great work and the problem is they're unaware of the deadlines and the need to get things in as quickly as possible. That's probably the toughest thing. And having to fire people kinda stinks. That too is something that becomes necessary. You don't get to be everyone's friend, you get to be everyone's lord and master."

Sounds like a fast-paced, hectic job alright. While not at work though, Brevoort slows down enough to read books and comics, have quality family time, surf the Net and watch a lot of movies. With a passion for action flicks, he cites Jackie Chan as the great action hero.

Whew! Well, Chan may be a human fighting machine, but face Brevoort in a one-on-one trivia match and watch him kick butt! Just ask Dr. Doom and the Leader. The competition was fierce but in the end, they were outclassed and ost. They never stood a chance with this Marvel editor on the team. High-five, Tom! You helped save the Earth!





ANDY MANGELS'S ALL-NEW REEL MARVEL

SILVER SURFER

PART TWO

Last month, we gave you the lowdown on Fox's all-new Silver Surfer animated series, the first solo series for Marvel's philosopher of the spaceways. If everything goes as planned, the series will debut in February, and all thirteen original episodes will air in order.

So, what are those episodes, and which of Marvel's favorite space heroes can you expect to see on the screen? Read on for a complete breakdown of the first season of The Silver Surfer. Especially look for stories from acclaimed writer Harlan Ellison and original Star Trek writer D.C. Fontana.

Silver Surfer #1 "The Origin of the Silver Surfer - Part I"
Written by Larry Brody
Just as the Watcher has warned, Galactus has arrived at Zenn-La to consume its energy. Norrin Radd sacrifices himself by offering to serve as Galactus's herald, whose job it will be to scout out planets without intelligent life so that Galactus won't destroy any civilizations. On the upside, Galactus gives Norrin a portion of his powers, turning him into the Silver Surfer. On the downside, the transference of powers removes Norrin's memories and his moral convictions!

Silver Surfer #2 "The Origin of the Silver Surfer - Part II"
Written by Larry Brody
With no memories, the Silver Surfer finds world after world for Galactus to devour, but the herald is troubled by the destruction. The evil Thanos uses Ego, the Living Planet to invade the Surfer's mind, intent on finding the secrets of Galactus within. The resulting mental battle unleashes the Surfer's memories and he goes to confront Galactus.

Silver Surfer #3 "The Origin of the Silver Surfer - Part III"
Written by Larry Brody
When Galactus decides to attack the Earth, the Surfer rebels, attacking the world-eater. Although the Surfer cannot harm Galactus, he is allowed to return to Zenn-La. When he gets there, he discovers that the planet has been moved, and he is now alone in space! The Surfer vows to find Zenn-La and his beloved Shalla Bal.

Silver Surfer #4 "The Planet of Dr. Moreau"
Written by Larry Brody and Christopher Kane
The Surfer searches to find a Kree colony, where a Zenn-La scholar is rumored to be living. Surfer is enslaved by the Kree and forced to work alongside genetically-engineered creatures known as "Trolls." Teaming up with Pip the Troll, and Pip's girlfriend, Kili, the Surfer leads a revolt against the Kree slavers.

Silver Surfer #5 "Learning Curve - Part I"
Story by Larry Brody and Jeffrey Knokey; Teleplay by Larry Brody and Andrea Lawrence
The Surfer and Pip join Mentor and his servant, Drax the Destroyer, as they search for the mythical Universal Library. Mentor hopes to stop his mad brother, Thanos, from taking over the universe. Plus, the Wanderers, Eternity, and Infinity have a grave warning for the Watcher, Gamora and the Draconians appear, and Nebula, the space pirate, unleashes monsters!

Silver Surfer #6 "Learning Curve - Part II"
Written by Larry Brody
Drax attacks the monsters and the Universal Library is destroyed before the Surfer can find out where Zenn-La has been hidden. Plus, the Surfer and Mentor find out how the Watcher race was destroyed. In all the excitement, both Surfer and Mentor also miss the key to the knowledge they seek.

Silver Surfer #8 "Innervisions"
Written by Larry Brody and Alan Swaze
The Surfer finds a series of planets that have been devastated by Thanos, and Surfer rushes to warn the next planet that Thanos has targeted. It is a planet of Dreamers, and Surfer must awaken one of their heroes, Beta Ray Bill, to help defeat Thanos once and for all. But how can they do that when all Thanos really wants is the love and approval of Lady Chaos?

Silver Surfer #7 "Antibody"
Story by Harlan Ellison, Michael Steven Gregory and Larry Brody; Teleplay by Larry Brody and Michael Steven Gregory
Galactus is dying, and his new herald, a spunky Earth girl named Nova, enlists the Surfer's aid to help save his life. They enter Galactus' bloodstream, where they must fight not only his antibodies, but also the "digested" souls of his victims. Surfer must make an anguished decision: save Galactus with the knowledge that he'll continue to consume worlds, or allow him to die and lose the chance to find Zenn-La again?

Silver Surfer #9 "Second Foundation"
Story by Larry Brody; Teleplay by Larry Brody and Michael Steven Gregory
Nova is torn between her duties for Galactus and her love for the Silver Surfer, but she helps the Surfer try to find Zenn-La. They end up on the ancient Skrull homeworld, where they become fighters in a revolution that is tearing apart the world of the shape-changers.

Silver Surfer #10 "Radical Justice"
Story by Larry Brody; Teleplay by Larry Brody and Brooks Wachtal
The Surfer is captured by Lord Glenn and the Wanderers and put on trial for the crimes of Galactus. The Surfer is stripped of his powers and must fight the bounty hunter Raze as a mere mortal. But in the battle, Surfer discovers that his loss of powers may not be all that it seems, and his discovery of a creature known as the Mind Worm helps him save both his life and those of the Wanderers.

Silver Surfer #11 "The Forever War"
Story by Larry Brody and D.C. Fontana; Teleplay by Mark Hoffmeier and Larry Brody
The Surfer asks the Kree Supreme Intelligence to help him find Zenn-La, and is transported to another dimension, where Adam Warlock wages battle against the Kree. The Surfer frees Warlock from the battle, but on returning to the Kree homeworld, they discover that the Supremor has evil plans for Warlock. The two heroes must find a way to return Warlock to his "forever war."

Silver Surfer #12 "Return To Zenn-La"
Written by Larry Brody
The Surfer finally finds Zenn-La and is reunited with his beloved Shalla Bal. But things seem different, and the behavior of Shalla Bal gets increasingly strange and dangerous. The Surfer soon discovers that he has not found his home at all; instead he has found a lonely female "Living Planet" who will stop at nothing to make the Surfer her own!

Silver Surfer #13 "The End of Eternity"
Written by Dallas Barnes and Larry Brody
The Surfer is summoned by Eternity and Infinity, and is warned that Thanos has found a way to make time flow backwards, thus bringing about the end of the universe! As the Surfer rushes to stop Thanos, the universe begins to contract around him. When it appears as if the Surfer dies in his battle with Thanos, Eternity and Infinity wonder if all has been lost.

SILVER SURFER CAST LIST

The voice cast for The Silver Surfer is composed almost entirely of Toronto actors, with many of them familiar names to animation fans. Although the Silver Surfer was voiced in the recent Fantastic Four cartoons by British actor Robin Sachs, he will be voiced in this series by actor Paul Essiembre. Perhaps the most recognizable of the other actors is John Neville (Eternity), who plays the Well-Manicured Man on TV's popular The X-Files series!

Surfer/Norrin Radd	Paul Essiembre
Shalla Bal	Camilla Scott
The Watcher	Colin Fox
The Master of Zenn-La	Aron Tager
Galactus	James Blendick
Thanos	Gary Krawford
Ego, the Living Planet	Roy Lewis
Lord Glenn	Mark Strange
Ivar and Pip the Troll	Robert Bockstael
Frankie Raye/Nova	Tara Rosling
Beta Ray Bill	Karl Pruner
Adam Warlock	Oliver Becker
Gamora	Alison Sealy-Smith
Supreme Intelligence	David Hemelin
Lady Chaos	Lally Cadeau
Drax the Destroyer	Norm Spencer
Mentor	Cedric Smith
Nebula	Jennifer Dale
Infinity	Elizabeth Sheperd
Eternity	John Neville
Infection	Shirley Douglas
Watcher Prime	Denis Akiyama
Amber	Alyson Court
Husseri	David Hemblin
Kalek	Don Francks
Gamma	Nicole Oliver
Shellaine	Valerie Buhagiar
Votrick	Rick Bennett
Maciag	Michael Copeman
Kili the Troll	Elizabeth Hanna
Raze	Len Doncheff
Geatar	Howard Jerome
Nietre	Bernard Behrens
Voice of Sphere	Lorne Kennedy
Kiar	David Calderisi
Zedrao	Lawrence Bayne

QuickSilver

Welcome to the Marvel Universe that would have been if today's hottest creators had been around at the birth of Marvel Comics. Think of this as the world that might have been. Think of it as the world that might still be becoming.

Vince Giarrano, whose artwork has graced everything from Dr. Fate to Manhunter to Batman to Pete and Mo, lends his considerable talent to the mutant speedster who for years has raced along the fine line between hero and villain— the child of the atom called Quicksilver.

Quicksilver's story begins, even before he was born, with the act of running. His mother, pregnant with both the child who would become Quicksilver and the daughter who would become the Scarlet Witch, took flight from her home, in fear of the strange powers her husband was exhibiting. Her husband, as she discovered in horror, was a mutant. Pietro (Quicksilver) and his sister grew up with gypsies with a surrogate father who was a puppeteer. But in time, destiny took hold of the young mutant, and Pietro became the ally of his true father as part of the Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants. Later, he became his father's enemy as a member of X-Factor and Avengers. Quicksilver's mutant ability, that is, that microscopic strand that separates him from all Homo Sapiens, is the ability to run at speeds up to 100 miles per hour.

But in the world of Time Slip, the world where Vince Giarrano designs Quicksilver, the choice to be a hero or villain is denied the boy born Pietro Maximov.

For here, Quicksilver was born different than he was in our universe. Here, once he reached puberty, his body became a strange silvery liquid, impossible to control. Pietro was literally jarred and put on display in a traveling freak show. It wouldn't be until years later that a man would come to discover him in this ragtag vagabond show and liberate him.

This man, as you may have guessed, was named Magnus—also known in certain parts of the world as Magneto. He helped Pietro learn to control the power that had stolen almost all that was recognizable of himself.

In time, Pietro would come to love this man as if he were his true father. Together with the other members of the Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants, they would strike at the world, at those who would point their fingers and spit words like "ugly" and "freak." The Brotherhood would strike at all those who thought there could be peace between humanity and mutants... including the X-Men.

But in this world, as in all, there must be a time for rebellion between fathers and their sons. But Pietro would not be allowed the chance to change his mind and become a hero. For here, once the seeds of rebellion were sown within him and he, like his mother, tried to run, he would discover the true power of Magneto.

For Magneto's ability to control all metal saw to it that Pietro, made of complete metal, could never run away.

Pietro was but a puppet under his true father's control. A father who loved Pietro, as he believed, too much to allow him his freedom.

FEATURING BULLPEN GREAT,

ROBBIE CAROSELLA!...

BY LYSA HAWKINS

In a dark corner of Marvel's production department works a man who has been with the company for nearly twenty years. In his time he's witnessed the modernization and computerization of the production department, seen editors and artists come and go, as well as coached Marvel's softball team to championship.

When Robbie Carosella started working in the Bullpen, it consisted of only six people. Boy, oh boy, did it grow!

LH: How did you get started with Marvel?
RC: Well, I needed a job. My last unemployment check had just run out. I had been making photostats in a studio and an ad agency. The studio went under. So I looked in the New York Times and saw an ad for Photostat Operator and it turned out to be for Marvel. I came in for an interview; the interviewer was Danny Crespi (then the manager of production, a.k.a. the Bullpen) but initially Danny didn't want me. He wanted the other applicant who was married, but two other people won him over and they hired me. So here I am.

LH: Have you done any freelance here for Marvel?
RC: The second year I was here, 1979 or '80, I started doing coloring. I was a colorist for five years.

LH: That's great! What books did you work on?
RC: Ironically, the first book that was given to me was by Mark Gruenwald. It was five pages of MACHINE MAN. He also gave me my first full book, which was GHOST RIDER. I colored about fifteen or twenty issues of that. I also colored fifteen or twenty issues of INDIANA JONES...all the biggies.

LH: What made you stop coloring?
RC: It was kind of like working all day and then working all night at home. It was really hard. And I really wasn't that good at it. There were so many people more talented than I was. Although I had great teachers like Marie Severin and George Roussos.

LH: How would you describe your job?
RC: The photostat job has evolved into an amazing thing. We now, in lieu of photostats, do scanning. We scan art boards (comic pages) that come in. It's kind of like a copy machine: we're just putting the copies onto an electronic file. We reduce it into the right resolution for the reproduction process and then put it onto the main server (computer network) under the book's title. From scanning it goes more of less on a an invisible conveyer belt to the people out in the Bullpen who do various jobs, set it up and clean the art, and prepare it for the color process. Eventually it goes to you, Lysa.*

LH: How would you say the Bullpen has evolved over the years?
RC: Well, when I first started in the Bullpen there were six people. There was a cover guy, a letters page guy, and a couple of letter correctionists. Marie Severin was in the Bullpen as well; she was the Art Director. Danny Crespi was in charge of the Bullpen. At one point, five or six years ago, there were maybe 35 people working there. The actual size of the Bullpen was bigger than the company size when I came here. Now of course, we're into computers, and there are very few artist tables around. I think the character of the Bullpen has remained essentially the same. It's like invading China. You can't invade China; China absorbs you. The Bullpen seems to absorb people and turn them into characters.

LH: Who was the toughest production boss?
RC: Virginia Romita comes to mind. She wasn't tough in a technical way. By her own admission she wasn't versed in production techniques, but she ran the place like she would run her own household. Those were her own words. She demanded that people keep the place neat, be presentable, and of course, be on time.

LH: What artists do you admire?
RC: I always liked John Buscema's stuff, John Romita, Bill Sienkiewicz, I guess I'm going back to the old-timers and their classic look. Of the new guys, John Romita Jr., the Kuberts are good.

LH: Is there any Marvel character that you feel you identify with?
RC: I've always liked Captain America. He seemed to typify the Marvel hero. He also goes back to World War Two and it's a patriotic thing essentially. Plus my good friend Mark Gruenwald wrote a hundred issues or more, more than anyone else.

LH: What's your fondest memory here?
RC: We had a Marvel cruise, in 1984. We had about 40 cabins on board. An overnight cruise around New York. I ran the whole thing, and everyone came. That was a whole lot of fun.

I think it's more like a bunch of memories. People that have come and gone come back to Marvel and still see me around. People that I knew long ago have children working here now (like Susan Crespi, daughter of Danny).

It's always been like a family.

*My staff job is the end of the line in production. I'm quality control.

BLADE

A CUT ABOVE

BY BRYAN CAIRNS

In the Marvel Universe, some things just don't take the hint and stay dead. Case in point, those pesky pain in the neck, blood-sucking vampires. Doctor Strange once wiped the lifeless lot out with the Darkhold's Montesi Formula only to have the fang-faces return and consistently keep popping up. And they say cockroaches are annoying.

Now in New Orleans, the undead want to reclaim the night, turning humanity into an all-you-can-eat buffet. But it may be dino extinction time for the undead because beginning in February's BLADE, a new series by Don (ZORRO, KILLRAVEN) McGregor and Brian (JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY) Hagan, the vampire killer is going to show those nightstalkers where they can take that stake and shove it.

"The series is going to be a real mixture of traditional horror as well as contemporary horrors that exist in our time," says scribe McGregor. "We'll be taking a look at what it costs Blade to be a vampire killer."

Blade's nocturnal activities began even before adulthood. When his mother went into labor, the vampire Deacon Frost arrived posing as a doctor. He bit her and although her screams alerted her friends and caused Frost to flee, she died while giving birth to Blade. Since then, he has become obsessed with the destruction of these creatures, eventually exacting revenge upon Frost. He has even battled with the Lord of the Dead, Dracula.

"I've known about him before and I always liked the concept of a vampire hunter where it was more than just a job," offers artist Hagan. "It was personal. It's something more than 'I have [wooden] stakes, [and] I will kill.'"

McGregor says the initial issue will reintroduce Blade and be a jumping on point for both old and new readers. For people who have never heard of the character, "You really have to bring them into his world, what motivates him and hopefully get the audience to identify with his life," says the writer. "The other fact is some readers have followed Blade for years and it has to extend what they knew about him before and take him forward."

The first issue pits Blade against two vampires holed up in an abandoned river boat on the Mississippi River. Formerly an old gambling ship, the insides have been renovated into a morgue for corpses. Another prevalent threat will be a traveling vampire named Ulysses Sojourner. It seems Sojourner is a savior concerned about the survival of his brethren. He appears in trouble spots where the undead population is rapidly dropping and tries to unite them. With Blade in the area, it's been open season and their only chance is to destroy their persecutor first. And of course there's the vampire enclave inside a restaurant run by the Paul Prudhomme of vampires. The menu caters to the midnight clientele and Blade is sure to eventually stop by for a review. Hmmm...Blood pudding anyone?

Morbius, the Living Vampire, is also going to be a recurring cast member in many of the stories. Originally a brilliant biochemist dying from a rare blood disease, Dr. Michael Morbius looked at alternative methods for a cure. An experiment involving vampire bats and later electrical shock treatment accidentally transformed him into a monster. Only a pseudo-vampire because of his appearance and blood lust, Morbius has been searching for a cure to this condition. Neither good nor evil, he has aided the heroes in their struggles, but has recently been a thorn in the side of Spider-Man and X-Man.

It will be revealed that Morbius is in New Orleans to atone for the grief he has caused his fiancée. To make amends, he's now involved in a secret matter with her family. Blade enters the picture when he is hired to kill Morbius who he now believes is an actual vampire. Blade's enigmatic employer is Dominique Levant, a woman who appears to have valid reason to see Morbius permanently six feet under. But could it be Levant isn't who she says she is and is setting Blade up to stake a human being? To complicate matters, Blade has the hots for her, setting up a romantic triangle.

"Blade is very attracted to Dominique which brings out a difficult situation 'cause he's already involved with another woman," explains McGregor. "He knows this Dominique shouldn't be in his head but she continues to dominate his thoughts and fantasies. It provokes a very difficult situation for him."

Whatever the outcome, Blade's and Morbius' relationship will always be in constant flux since they can't see eye to eye on anything. Both have different approaches and while Blade eats, drinks and sleeps vampires, Morbius wants nothing to do with them. What happens between them will be an ongoing theme throughout the year.

If anyone is betting that Blade will only deal with vampires and plunging stakes in their hearts, then here's a newsflash. The book's stories will also stretch into social issues such as unwed teenage mothers. One such character is a young heroin addict who has been breast-feeding her child and as a result, the baby becomes addicted to the drug. Readers may cringe when the baby receives a visit from a giant rodent while the mother is preoccupied with her daily euphoric fix.

"This will provoke real desperate measures by both Blade and Morbius," says McGregor. "They will go to extremes to try and rectify the situation and maybe it's beyond their control."

One of the elements McGregor wants to explore is what Blade does while sitting around carving his arsenal of stakes. What does he do when he's not on the prowl? The answer is found within the brain-draining boob tube. Hundreds of channels and nothing is on.

"He watches an awful lot of television so there're pop cultural references in the book," says McGregor. "But I think it's something the audience can really relate to; it's something they have in common with Blade. He probably knows more than he should."

A current ongoing trend in the horror genre is to combine terror laced with bits of humor. McGregor has incorporated this style into the book so readers can simultaneously experience two sensational levels: fear and excitement partnered with laughter. One of the vampires in the first issue, Worm Face, was a bait man whose greatest living ambition was to get on the Letterman Show for stupid human tricks. And for trivia buffs, every major vampire novel and vampire or biting reference will also get mentioned or spoofed upon. Whether it's Mike Tyson or Blade calling Anne Rice a cure for insomnia, it's all fair game.

"The writing reminds me of what I like about Joe (DEADPOOL/X-MEN) Kelly's stuff," says Hagan. "The book isn't played real straight all the time. Basically you have someone killing a vampire and cracking a joke at the same time. There's a lot of ironic humor in some scenes, which is great."

So maybe the only unanswered question here is who would win in a fight, Buffy the Vampire Slayer or Blade? "Well, Buffy seems to take a punch pretty well," laughs McGregor. "Even to the face, she seldom gets marked up. However, Blade doesn't want to attack real live human beings, especially someone going around and killing vampires. He'll probably want to fight side by side with her."

In the meantime, lock the doors, hang the garlic wreaths, sharpen the stakes and order a healthy supply of holy water and crosses. Until BLADE hits the stands, no one is safe at night.

Marvel's **Silliest Moments** presents...

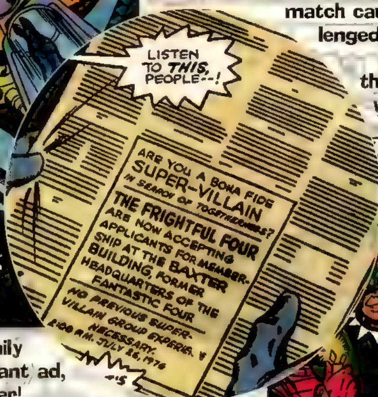
Wanted: One Super-Villain; must be frightful!

What does a team of super-villains do when they want to hire a new member? Would you believe, they put an ad in the paper?

That was the solution arrived at by the Frightful Four in the pages of FANTASTIC FOUR #177! The evil FF had a problem. Two previous teammates, Medusa and Thundra, had quit and betrayed them. So the remaining members of the team—the Wizard, the Trapster, and the Sandman—did the only logical thing they could do: they held auditions for a new fourth member!

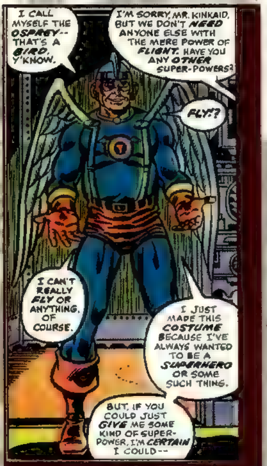
Since the heroic Fantastic Four were off in outer space, the villainous Frightful Four Minus One decided to hold their casting call in the FF's headquarters, the Baxter Building! The evil FF wanted only male villains to apply, but the Daily Bugle, which ran the cleverly written want ad, wouldn't let them discriminate by gender!

Reed Richards and Co. could do nothing but sit there helplessly while the Frightful Four screened their prospective candidates for villainy!



The real FF returned from space to find the auditions brazenly going on in their own HQ! A brief fight ensued, in which the good FF were captured by their sinister counterparts. Reed Richards and Co. could do nothing but sit there helplessly while the Frightful Four screened their prospective candidates for villainy!

The first applicant was a winged washout calling himself the Osprey. Osprey had no powers of his own, but hoped the Wizard could give him some. The Wizard was so infuriated by this powerless poseur that he swiftly tossed the Osprey out the window, and demanded that "All those without TRUE super-powers need not apply—OR ELSE!"



The winged washout calling himself the Osprey

The next applicant was truly super-powered—the tempestuous Texas Twister! T.T. was eager to sign up—"long as yuh match the STARTIN' SALARY that ANOTHER buncha fellers offered." Sandman berated him, "Why you dumb HICK! You'll get your share of the loot we snatch, and that's ALL!"

Since he had received a better offer from SHIELD, the Twister decided to "mosey along."

The tempestuous Texas Twister!

The next candidate was an angry Thundra, who attacked her former partners in the evil FF and was quickly subdued. Next in line was Scott Lobdell's all-time favorite character, Captain Ultra, making his debut appearance! (Strangely, the value of the issue did not increase because of this momentous event!)

Captain Ultra seemed too good to be true. He had super-strength, he could fly... There was only one problem: aside from having perhaps the ugliest costume ever created, C.U. also had a fear of fire! Even the sight of a lit match caused C.U. to faint dead away! The Wizard ordered the color-challenged Captain to "get out of here, you blithering BUFFOON!"

The next applicant was Tigra, who caused some discomfort for the evil FF. The Sandman griped, "SKIRTS! I tell ya, I don't like workin' with SKIRTS!" Sandman's instincts turned out to be correct as the heroic Tigra leapt into action, freeing the Thing and the Human Torch from their traps.

The sight of a lit match caused C.U. to faint dead away!

A battle broke out in the Baxter Building, causing the Wizard to send an urgent message down to the remaining applicants in the lobby: "If any of you can help us defeat the Thing and the Human Torch, the membership you covet is YOURS FOR LIFE!" Most of the applicants turned tail and ran, one of them commenting, "ULP! I wanted to play super-villain, but I wanted to start by fighting somebody easier than those two...like maybe GODZILLA!"

Finally the evil FF found their fourth member—the evil Reed Richards of Counter-Earth, who also went by the name of the Brute! But even the Brute turned out to be a good guy in the end, leaving the Frightful Four still searching for that elusive fourth member! If only they had changed the name of their team to "The Threatening Three," they wouldn't have had all these problems!

—Barry Dutter

Scott Lobdell's all-time favorite character, Captain Ultra, making his debut appearance!

"It's not easy being green."
— Kermit the Frog

BEAST FILES

What would go through your mind if you were caught in a nuclear explosion? The fraction of a second you had to live would scarcely be time enough to fully comprehend what was going on around you. The poetic among us would like to think that one's life would flash before his eyes shortly before he would becoming atomized by the intense heat and force generated by the blast's unrivaled power. Now, imagine being someone who not only was faced with this situation, but miraculously survived it. Further compound this quandary with the possibility that you now can change into the strongest being on Earth, but are cursed with the fact that you're hated, hunted, and hounded by nearly everyone else, all the while having to deal with the very problems characterized by the memories that flashed through your mind in that instant you thought you were going to die. Thus, in short, is the nature of the creature known as the Incredible Hulk.

Dr. Robert Bruce Banner was a nuclear physicist working specifically in the study of gamma radiation. He worked laboriously for the government, spearheading the development of a new type of nuclear weapon, the Gamma Bomb. It was during the very first testing that Banner was faced with saving the life of a young Rick Jones who had inadvertently wandered into the testing facility on a dare. Bruce asked that the testing be stopped while he got the young man to safety, but because the man entrusted with stopping the testing was a foreign agent, the countdown was not halted. And so it was that Bruce hurled Rick Jones into the relative safety of a trench and the gamma bomb exploded, bathing his body with lethal amounts of the strange radiation.

Surprisingly, Banner not only survived, but soon found that he could transform into a superhumanly strong being. At first he only changed at night, retained his human intellect, and had a gray pigment to his skin. Also, his strength was not even half of what his current capacity is. But over time this was proven to be only a transitional stage, as his mind slowly regressed into a childlike state. Eventually his transformations were no longer triggered by the lack of daylight; instead they were initiated by the onset of severe emotional distress, while his skin became an emerald green. Most notably, anger drove this bestial form of his, and mass destruction was sure to follow in the creature's wake.

A large portion of the damage done around the Hulk, however, was not due to the direct actions of the Hulk, but instead to the fact that the Hulk himself was pursued at every turn by the military who wanted to destroy him, as well as other various agencies and other superhumans who wished to harness the Hulk's power for their own benefit. During this time as well, Banner was able to maintain a relationship that would later blossom into a marriage with Elizabeth "Betty" Ross, the daughter of General Thaddeus E. "Thunderbolt" Ross. It was Thunderbolt Ross who most notably was responsible for much of the pursuit of the Hulk, while it was Betty who was consistently responsible for calming the Hulk, triggering the transformation back into Banner.

Over the years, numerous transformations surrounding the creature have occurred. There were times when the Hulk's body was still governed by Banner's intellect. There was a time as well that Banner himself was separated somehow from the Hulk's body. Still later there was a gray-hued version, similar to the first incarnation, but he was much more cunning. In this incarnation, he retained much of Banner's intellect, but absolutely no morality. This form also was much weaker in strength than the green version of himself, and apparently available to him only at night and further affected by the phases of the moon.

Shortly after this development, Dr. Leonard Samson [See File: Doc Samson], a noted psychologist and superhumanly strong being also powered by gamma radiation, realized that he might in fact be dealing with a mental disorder rather than something physical, as had been previously explored. Upon investigation, Samson found that Bruce Banner had a severe case of MPD (Multiple Personality Disorder). Banner's MPD was caused when, as a child, his father systematically abused both him and his mother, which resulted in the murder of his mother. Fearing emotion, Banner decided that emotions as a whole were bad, and also lost his childhood in the process, thus explaining why the release of emotion triggered the change to a childlike or very emotional being.

Samson was, for a time, able to merge the various aspects of Bruce into one collective being. However, sometime later, other changes occurred which further complicated the development of the Hulk. For a time, whenever the Hulk grew angry, he would turn into his very fragile, human form of Bruce Banner, who reacted the same as had the green, childlike Hulk of years prior. Then when the Onslaught incident occurred, Hulk inexplicably split into two forms, and the Bruce Banner aspect disappeared, leaving behind only the Hulk aspect. This creature carved a destructive path across America, including the capture, if one can call it that, of an entire island in the Florida Keys. Recently, the Hulk has apparently, once again, been reintegrated with Bruce Banner; however the effects of this reunion remain to be seen.

NOTES:

First and foremost, as the green-skinned goliath is fond of saying, "Hulk is strongest one there is." And as far as is ascertainable, this is quite an accurate phrase indeed. The Hulk is generally accepted as being able to easily lift/press over 100 tons. In years past, however, he has been observed to have a far greater strength, almost exponentially increased, exerted when Hulk becomes more angry. There were even reports of him lifting as much as 500 tons or more, as well as one account where he actually supported the weight of an entire mountain on his back. What exactly his current strength level is in his latest form remains to be seen, but it is highly unlikely that his strength will be matched easily.

In conjunction with his great strength, the Hulk possesses the capacity to make standing leaps up to 3 miles in distance in a single bound. Further, his skin is dense enough to easily repel most attacks on him, turning them into the slightest of inconveniences and nothing more than minor annoyances. Couple this with his healing factor which has proven effective enough to heal him nearly instantly when he was disemboweled, and you have a being that quite possibly may not be destroyed by anything short of his being ground zero during a nuclear blast.

As for my personal belief on the origin of his powers, I would surmise that we are in fact dealing with a metamorph of the highest order. He is a metamorph capable of changing his shape only by acts of his unconscious mind, however, with no seeming limit to the way in which he can harness the vast amounts of energy stored within his body. Where exactly he draws the extra mass from and where it is stored when not in use bears further investigation, but quite literally we may just have seen the tip of the iceberg as far as all things regarding this poor, living example of Jekyll and Hyde is concerned.

GALACTUS

Forget the New York blackout, Boss Tweed, the garbage strike and King Kong; the biggest cataclysm to ever befall the Big Apple (and the world) occurred in 1966.

The sky over Manhattan filled with fire, rocks and then a strange-looking silver alien on a surfboard. These unsettling sights were nothing compared to what followed—a massive UFO. Its pilot was a 28-foot, 18-ton alien giant who descended to Earth and announced, "This planet shall sustain me until it has been drained of all elemental life. So speaks Galactus!" Meet Galactus, Marvel's most frightening alien being!

When he first stepped onto our world in FANTASTIC FOUR #48 ('The Coming Of Galactus!'), he launched the universally heralded three-part story now known as 'The Galactus Trilogy'. What made Galactus so scary was that he was so far beyond us—a titanic force of nature, neither good nor evil. Pitiless, coldly logical and hungry, Galactus feeds on the life-energy of planets, leaving them lifeless husks!

Unlike Dr. Doom, Loki, Dr. Octopus, the Red Skull and every other heavy hitter, Galactus bears us no grudge, he's simply hungry and wants to eat the Earth! Galactus even says, "Though I ravage worlds to live, I bear no malice toward any living thing. I simply do what I must to survive." How can you disagree with that? He's the most feared creature in the Marvel Universe and why not? He even devoured the Skrulls' homeworld!

Galactus clearly sprang from Stan Lee's desire to pit the FF against a greater challenge. "I created Galactus after we had done so many villains and wanted something different. I wondered, 'How could we get something bigger than a villain? Let's do a guy who's like a demigod—I like the name Galactus'. He comes from Outer Space and eats planets, or some stupid thing," Lee laughs.

Lee and artist Jack Kirby created the ultimate giant monster, the 'Thinking Man's Fin Fang Foom'. In fact, Fin Fang Foom can be seen as a prototype for Galactus, he made similar pitiless proclamations, but Galactus is much more refined and intelligent. He doesn't bother crushing our buildings because we are so far beneath his notice. He's simply coming for take-out!

His arrival is always preceded by his herald, in this instance, The Silver Surfer. When the Surfer shows up, the universe trembles with fear. A Skrull asks his leader, "With all our weapons and armaments—why do we so fear the lone Silver Surfer?" He's told, "It is not merely him, you fool!! Have you not studied your cosmic history? Wherever he appears, it is certain that Galactus cannot be very far behind!"

Brimming with the power cosmic, Galactus fears nothing. He doesn't even notice the FF, shrugging off even The Thing's strongest punches. To add insult to injury, he's destroying our world from the roof of the Baxter Building! He responds to the FF's attacks by dropping a 'bug bomb' on them that nearly kills all four. He ignores the FF and finds The Watcher the only one worth speaking to.

Born before the Big Bang, Galactus was named "Galan" and hailed from an advanced alien race on the planet Taa. When he discovers Taa and the universe are doomed, Galan and a small band of survivors decide to meet their end at the heart of the universe.

Everyone dies except Galen who bonds with the universe—together they become "a living organism who possesses the matchless power and raging appetite of a galaxy. He shall be more than a galaxy. He shall be a Galactic ravager...He shall be GALACTUS!"

Galactus is not so different from us in that he gets hungry as we do. He even has a pet cat like most of us do. Except his cat would tear your head off! When the FF bother him, he puts his cat on them —'his cat' being The Punisher—not Frank Castle but an unbeatable cyborg that cannot be stopped and resembles a giant metal frog wearing swim goggles.

Galactus's herald, The Silver Surfer, is committed only to Galactus; however Ben Grimm's blind girlfriend Alicia convinces him of Earth's good qualities. He attempts to stop Galactus, pleading "Master! For the first time I realize the dreadful enormity of what you plan to do! You cannot destroy the human race!" Galactus responds with a terse "Would you hesitate to tread upon an anthill? These creatures are of no consequence to Galactus!"

The Surfer, who was stripped of his space-soaring abilities for his betrayal of Galactus, was the first of a long line of heralds. Galactus imbued others with a fraction of his power cosmic, including Terrax, Firelord, Airwalker and Nova (Frankie Raye, the Human Torch's old girlfriend).

In THE LAST GALACTUS STORY, it's strongly implied that Nova loves him and Galactus loves her back. This would explain Nova's attraction to the Surfer, Galactus's favorite ex-employee. Before Galactus and Nova could worry about the size difference, she's murdered by Galactus's renegade herald Morg. Galactus is so angered by this, he removes the power cosmic from Morg so his other ex-heralds can kill him.

Galactus is unstoppable. The FF, who had triumphed over alien invasions, mad dictators, robots, spies and every form of earthly evil, are beaten. It was only through The Watcher violating his code of non-interference and sending Johnny Storm across the universe to Galactus's massive ship that he is thwarted. Johnny (who temporarily loses his mind through the trip's immensity) brings back the Ultimate Nullifier.

Reed Richards points the weapon point-blank at Galactus's face, which offends the giant. "The Ultimate Nullifier—in the hands of a human?!" He's not upset with Reed, whom he barely acknowledges, but snarls at the Watcher, "You have given a match to a child who lives in a tinderbox!"

Galactus isn't angry or vindictive, just amazed. "So," the giant muses, "For the first time...Since the dawn of memory...My will has been thwarted! But I bear no malice! Emotion is for lesser beings!" (Galactus has a penchant for speaking with a lot of exclamation points!)

The MARVELS limited series showed how regular people reacted to Galactus's arrival by going to church, getting their affairs in order, out on the streets getting drunk or staying home glued to the TV news coverage. (An old guy on a porch suggests that somebody simply tell Captain America—he'll handle it!) After Galactus leaves, the Daily Bugle promptly declares the whole thing a hoax.

Galactus could also be spiteful. When The FF, the Watcher and his former herald the Silver Surfer successfully drove him away from Earth, he blasted the Surfer with eyebeams that left him marooned on our planet. In a later confrontation, he blasted Ben Grimm and reverted him back into The Thing. (This was after Reed had

'permanently' cured him.)

His purple and blue body armor helps him regulate his awesome power. While Galactus wore that impressive helmet (which bears a similarity to those seen in Akira Kurosawa's classic 1958 film, "The Hidden Fortress"), the rest of his outfit in his first appearance showed him to be a fashion victim! For one thing, he wore short pants, which made him look like a giant baby, and he had a giant "G" on his chest, apparently to remind himself of who he is!

'The Galactus Trilogy' is clearly one of Marvel's most influential stories. It's been copied several times by other comic companies and even by Hollywood. When the skies fill with fire in "Independence Day" as scared people and TV news crews watch, it was clearly an homage.

Hollywood's biggest use of the storyline came in 1984's "Ghostbusters," right down to four heroes (The Ghostbusters, not the FF) going to the roof of a New York skyscraper to do battle with an interdimensional alien (and a giant) intent on destroying our planet while terrified crowds watch. It practically owed Stan a 'Story by' credit!

Something about Galactus usually brings the best out in writers, artists and characters in the books where he appears. It's no surprise that the most exciting event in Marvel's 12-part "SECRET WARS" was not the final battle with the Beyonder, but the FF, X-Men, Avengers, Iron Man, Spidey and Hulk's desperate attempt to keep Galactus from devouring the world they are trapped upon. Even then, the combined might of the Marvel heroes doesn't actually defeat him, it merely slows him down.

Of course, the cosmic giant sometimes 'took a dive' and went up against characters unworthy of his time. Do we really believe he would ever consider The Dazzler—The Dazzler, for pete's sake—as a possible herald? He'd be better off giving the Power Cosmic to Brother Voodoo! Or that he would waste five minutes going up against The Sphinx, the FF's lamest foe? Or (choke!) that he could be thwarted by a cosmic-powered Aunt May and Franklin Richards in the most regrettable issue of the original MARVEL TEAM-UP?

A more equal match came when he met The High Evolutionary. Both characters had a penchant for playing God. One would create life and the other destroyed it. The High Evolutionary evolved animals into people. He eventually set them up on a Counter-Earth that was on the other side of the sun.

When Galactus decided to consume it, The Evolutionary was understandably upset. The FF watched while the two fought. The battle was inconclusive as Galactus devoured the Impossible Man's planet Poppup and gave himself a case of cosmic indigestion! (Recently mentioned in Marvel's Silliest Moments, Marvel VISION #7) He was also knocked unconscious by The Beyonder in SECRET WARS #1.

John Byrne's actually done the most interesting things with Galactus since Stan. On one occasion in a Byrne story, a sick Galactus comes to Earth where he's beaten by the combined forces of the FF, the Avengers and Dr. Strange (Daredevil and Spider-Man are also there, but they're so far out of their element, they just sit on a rooftop and watch!).

After the great Galactus is knocked down (by Reed slamming The Thing into his face like a slingshot), Reed saves his life. This led to the "Trial of Reed Richards," where the universe holds Mr. Fantastic culpable for the planet eater's crimes. Everything changes when Galactus comes to Reed's defense! (Byrne also advanced the theory that every race of aliens sees Galactus differently....To some, he appears as a shape, a ghost or even as pure energy.)

Over the years, Galactus and Reed have actually become friends, although Reed isn't ever really happy to see him. In SECRET WARS, the two of them actually sit down and have a conversation. As Sue and Reed were expecting a baby at the time, Galactus refused to reveal the infant's sad fate and instead gave Reed a pep talk on being a force for good. (A little out-of-character for Big G, but what the heck!)

Because some view Galactus as a god, he uses that to his advantage. He once tried to trick people into believing that his herald Airwalker was actually the archangel Gabriel coming to announce the end of the world (that way Galactus could devour the Earth without upsetting anyone).

In "The Parable," a Stan Lee-scripted story that takes place in a dark, FF-less future, Galactus returns while a corrupt Televangelist sets up a new faith—Galactus-worshipping! Happily, a downtrodden Silver Surfer rises to the occasion and drives his former master off.

Of course, Galactus is never gone for long... He was present at the birth of the universe, and, as he once noted, "I shall be there at its end...No matter how many worlds I devour...How many civilizations I destroy...It is my destiny to one day give back to the universe infinitely more than I have taken from it." So speaks Galactus!

— Pat Jankiewicz

GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN

Like anything, some projects are begun, and even completed, only to become the lost and might-have-been masterpieces of a phantom history. That's why the Greatest Comics Never Seen exists... to draw attention to those projects never given the opportunity to draw the attention of the art-loving world.

KIRBY'S FANTASTIC FOUR POSTER

Sometimes, as is the case with the following piece, even when these projects are found, buried under pile after pile of mounting memorabilia, no one has any idea why they exist or why a piece was ever commissioned.

Many consider the Fantastic Four to be Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's greatest collaboration. In fact, never has there been a comic book in history that has had both the writer and artist associated with the book for more than 100 issues. Lee and Kirby's run of subsequent stories ran for 102 issues. And both creators were involved off and on with "The World's Greatest Comics Magazine" after that.

This piece, it is believed, was to be a Marvel poster featuring the Fantastic Four along with one of the greatest villains of comic book history-Doctor Doom. Of what series of posters, at what point in Kirby's career as an artist, in what way this was to be presented, well... it's left for speculation.

To fandom, Kirby is the unrefuted KING OF COMICS. His artwork graced and baptized such Marvel heroes as Thor, Hulk, X-Men, Ant-Man, Avengers, Captain America, Silver Surfer, Black Panther and more. Through his art style and ability to draw sequential art, he literally wrote the book on what being a comic book artist is all about.

It's only fair (and perhaps unfair to the rest of the world) that his work should be a part of the GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN.

FF by KIRBY

NEW FROM THE NEW UNIVERSE

Back in the mid-eighties, in honor of Marvel's 25th anniversary, Jim Shooter, along with a host of Marvel creators including John Romita Jr, Peter David, Todd McFarlane, Mark Texiera, Keith Giffen, Tom DeFalco, Mark Gruenwald and Paul Ryan, created a whole New Universe of heroes on an alternate Earth said to be our own.

These titles included STAR BRAND, DP7, PSI-FORCE, MERC, SPITFIRE AND THE TROUBLE SHOOTERS, NIGHTMASK, KICKERS INC. and JUSTICE.

Artist extraordinaire Tony Salmons, whose current work in the animation world includes designs and sequential art for Aeon Flux and MEN IN BLACK, was the artist on the first two issues of NIGHTMASK.

Here, for the first time, is the unused original cover for NIGHTMASK #1, as penciled by Tony Salmons and inked by John Romita Jr.

NIGHTMASK perhaps could be an early version of Sandman, the first comic book hero to walk amongst dreams. And while the New Universe titles never grew beyond their cult-hit status, this piece of art, of course, is part of the GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN.

NIGHTMASK by SALMONS

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Say hello to life in the fast lane. Sonic R for Sega Saturn is a full-on pedal-to-the-metal hi-speed dash through five 3D courses, each rendered in full 360 degree panoramas. Choose from 5 different Sonic characters to race. Uncover hidden characters and secret shortcuts along the way. Whether you race tag team, relay or split-screen against your buddy is your call. You'll be flossing bug guts out of your teeth for weeks. Yum.
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RP
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STEVEN T. SEAGLE

BIG BREAKS

Featuring Steven T. Seagle

Welcome to the latest in our new series of interviews featuring the story behind the storytellers. The idea is to not only give you, the fan, a sense of how your favorite creators got into the biz, but also to give you an idea of what it takes to get in to Marvel.

This month, we're asking UNCANNY X-MEN's writer extraordinaire Steven Seagle how he got into the comics business.

MARVEL COMICS: First of all, let's talk about your past credits. What were they?

STEVEN SEAGLE: Kafka, Amazon, Grendel Tales, Sandman Mystery Theatre, Primal Force, Warblade, Solstice, Dark Horse Presents, House Of Secrets... and now, of course, ALPHA FLIGHT and UNCANNY X-MEN,

MC: How did you break into comics?

SS: Actually, I broke into comics twice. The first time was the result of a blind submission to a comic company called Renegade Comics. It was 1987 and I was still going to school. There was a hole in the schedule and I was invited to do my limited series, Kafka. So I found an artist in the area and we went to work. We did everything including two covers. It was really more like self-publishing than anything else. The good thing was, it got an awful lot of notice. It was nominated for an Eisner Award and got me my second job, at Comico.

MC: And that second job was...?

SS: Amazon. This was a three-issue limited series I did with Tim Sale and it remains, to this day, my favorite piece of work. I get offers to have it collected and printed as a trade paperback all the time. I'm still not sure where it is and/or who has the rights to collect it. Anyhow, this led to 5 issues of Grendel Tales with Matt Wagner, and then Jaguar Stories with Mike "Madman" Allred. Jaguar Stories never saw print, though, because Comico went out of business.

MC: What happened then?

SS: I was pretty soured over the whole comic book thing by this point, so I did what I always planned I'd do... I went into teaching.

MC: Where?

SS: I taught English at All-State College first, and later I taught at the University of California—Pasadena. I taught everything you'd expect: You know... English 101... Creative Writing... Shakespeare... etc. But I really don't want you to think I was really bummed over this. I liked teaching. I always wanted to teach. I taught for 3 years before...

MC: ... you broke into comics a second time.

SS: Right. This time, as opposed to getting in by sending a submission, it was because I knew people. This time, I knew James Robinson, who convinced me to go to New York with him to look for comic-writing gigs at the "Big 2". I walked into DC and by day's close, I walked out with 2 monthly series— Sandman Mystery Theatre and Primal Force. It was that simple. I was out. And then, I was in.

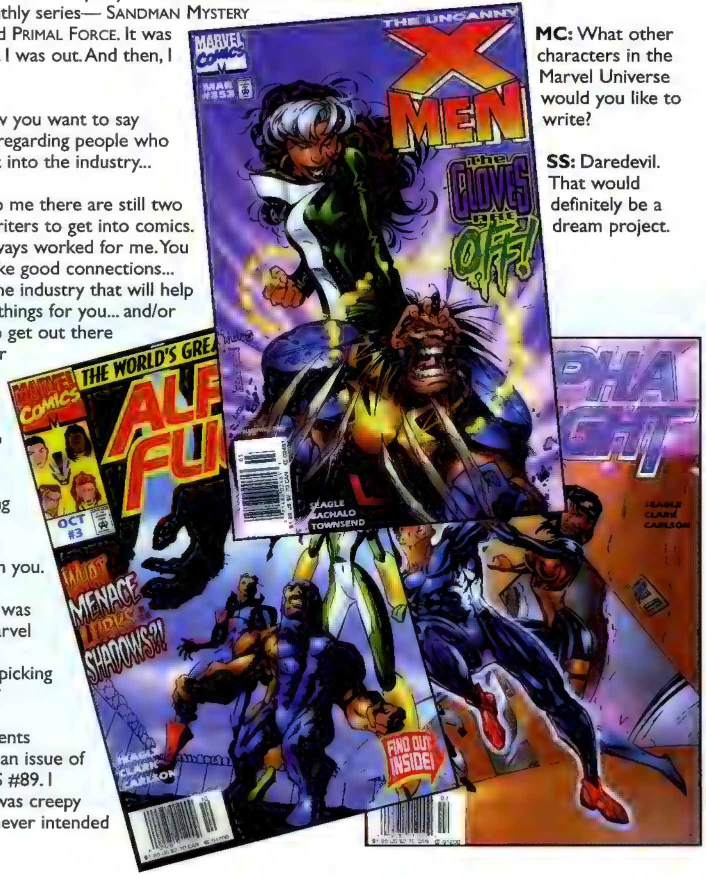
MC: I know you want to say something regarding people who want to get into the industry...

SS: Well, to me there are still two ways for writers to get into comics. And both ways worked for me. You have to make good connections... friends in the industry that will help jump-start things for you... and/or you have to get out there and do your own thing. Let people see what you have to offer. Let them see they're going to get something unique from you.

MC: What was the first Marvel comic you remember picking up as a kid?

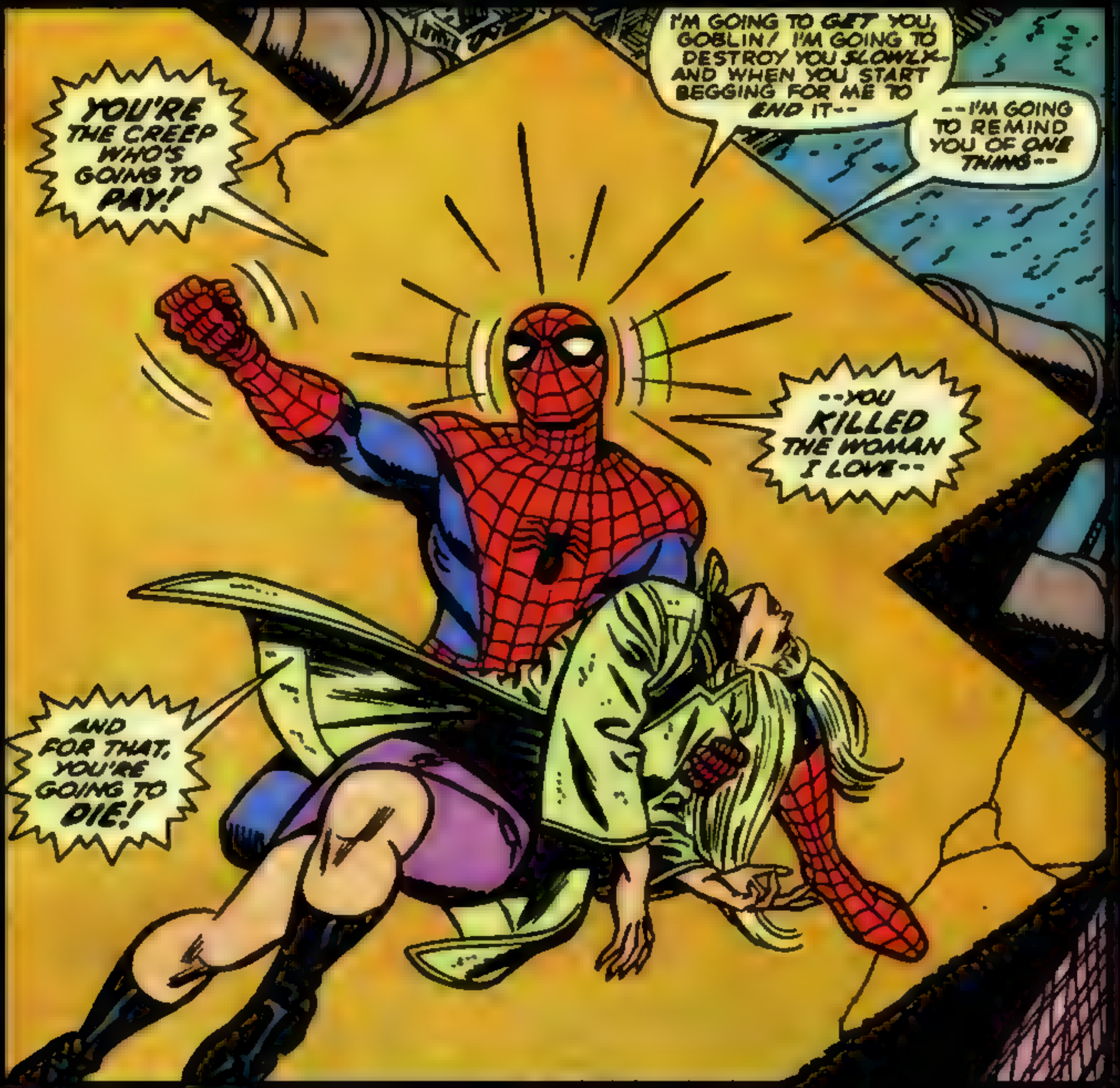
SS: My parents bought me an issue of AVENGERS #89. I thought it was creepy and really never intended to buy another comic. But then, later, one of my best friends got into comics. You know how that goes, I had to get into them then. UNCANNY X-MEN #114 was the first Marvel comic I ever bought for myself. I bought it at Safe-Way. It was the first monthly comic I ever followed.

I remember buying a CONAN #3 at a flea market for something like a quarter. And the deal was, I knew this was a really expensive book. The good part of it was, though, that I found another guy at the same flea market who knew exactly what it was worth. I traded the CONAN #3 with him for X-MEN #94-113. It's really cool that I'm on X-Men now. It's a dream.



MC: What other characters in the Marvel Universe would you like to write?

SS: Daredevil. That would definitely be a dream project.



FROM SPIDER-SLAYERS TO PLAYERS

AN INTERVIEW WITH GERRY CONWAY

In the 1970s, Gerry Conway was one of the hottest comic book writers in the business. He was the first person to write AMAZING SPIDER-MAN on a regular basis after Stan Lee, and he has written many major Marvel series, including FANTASTIC FOUR, HULK, and DAREDEVIL. But perhaps his biggest claim to fame is killing Peter Parker's girlfriend, the beloved Gwen Stacy in the now-classic AMAZING #121. In the early '90s, Gerry left the comics biz behind for a career in TV—currently, he is the supervising producer of the ABC-TV series PLAYERS!

FANTASTIC FOUR #48 contained the first published writing of Gerry Conway—on the letters page! Gerry was quite the Marvel maniac while growing up in Queens, NY. "It had always been my ambition to work for Marvel," Gerry recalls. "I was a big fan of Stan's writing. I collected the FANTASTIC FOUR at the newsstand, starting with issue three."

It was in the summer of his sixteenth year that Gerry sold his first story to DC—three years behind his inspiration, Jim Shooter, who had broken in at the tender age of thirteen! Gerry mused, "I was a slow learner!" Not too slow, apparently; this is a guy who sold his first novel the year he graduated high school in 1969!

While writing for DC's mystery comics, Gerry struck up a friendship with Roy Thomas, who was then a writer/editor at Marvel. Gerry recalls, "Roy was "looking for another writer to pinch-hit on some of the less demanding books, like SGT. FURY and SUB-MARINER... I wanted desperately to do those. After ghost plotting a couple issues of FANTASTIC FOUR for Stan, I got a shot. My first script for Marvel was a SGT. FURY. Then I did a KA-ZAR that Barry Smith drew. Then I got the assignment to write SUB-MARINER and IRON MAN."

Gerry wanted to continue to write for the editors who had given him his start at DC, but he had to make a choice. "Back then, there was a great emphasis on company loyalty. If you worked for one company, you were really not supposed to work for another. I don't know that that's quite as true today. I wanted to somehow work for (DC), but be at Marvel! I couldn't do that, so I ended up at Marvel full-time."

Gerry found himself in the unusual position of competing with his friends, Marv Wolfman and Len Wein, for work. "Len, Marv and I broke in at around the same time, within six months of each other. For the first five or six years, we were all rivals for the same jobs, but we were also pretty good friends!"

When Gerry first came aboard at Marvel, he had the opportunity to work with Stan Lee, who was one of his idols. Gerry reflects, "Stan is a character. I think Stan was bitten by a radioactive DJ as a kid, and basically has been doing the Cousin Brucie thing ever since! (laughter)"

Gerry cites Stan as a strong influence on his writing—"particularly FANTASTIC FOUR, up to around issue #60 or so. He and Jack Kirby were doing things that nobody had ever seen before." After Stan, Gerry's influences in the comics field include Gardner Fox, Julie Schwartz, and Roy Thomas. "They are the gods of my writing youth. Denny O'Neil, to a lesser degree, because his work didn't start having an impact until I had already turned pro."

Gerry's greatest challenge came when he was called to follow Stan as the second regular writer (following a few fill-ins by Roy Thomas) on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN! "It was intimidating, especially when you consider that I took it over in 1971, when I was 19 years old!" Gerry notes that one advantage he had in taking over the book was that he was a contemporary of Peter Parker's! "He was supposed to be this college-aged kid, and that's what I was!"

Gerry's biggest mark on Marvel History was the infamous Death of the Green Goblin and Gwen Stacy issues of AMAZING SPIDEY—#121-122. He calls that story "one of the seminal moments in all of comicdom. The more I think about it, the more I realize that, and this may be total egotism on my part, you can divide the comic business into two parts: Before The Death of Gwen Stacy, and After The Death of Gwen Stacy. Before, the comic book world was a fairly bright, cheerful, lighthearted sort of place. Bad things happened, but they weren't permanent. After Gwen Stacy, anything could happen. and bad things happened with increasing regularity. So in a sense, I think that story was the end of innocence for comic books."

Gerry revealed that the inspiration for killing Gwen came not from him, but from John Romita, who at the time was "the primary creative force on the book." Gerry recalls John suggesting various story ideas, including the death of Gwen Stacy. Then John left the book. Gerry maintains that "I am convinced that John would never have done it if he had stayed on the book." Gil Kane came aboard as the new artist, and Gerry decided to pursue Romita's suggestion of killing Gwen.

Gerry recalls that Stan and Roy were the primary editors. I couldn't do anything without their say-so. We talked it over, and John said it would be all right, so Stan said, "All right, we'll kill her off!"

The story was published, resulting in what Gerry calls "a storm of controversy like you have never seen in your life! (laughter) There was this outpouring of dismay, distress. Stan was pilloried at various conventions and colleges that he went to. He claimed that he did not know anything about this—(laughter)—that we snuck it through in the middle of the night while he wasn't looking, which was ridiculous!"

Gerry feels the ramifications of that story had a tremendous impact on the comics world, even 25 years later. "After that, Captain Marvel died, the whole Dark Phoenix arc began...the idea that the world is a dark place starts to percolate into the comics. And now, here we are...(laughter)... in a world where Spawn is a major-selling comic!"

While Gerry may have been the man who killed Gwen Stacy, he was also the man who brought her back— "not willingly"— as a clone, a couple years later! "That was an act of total cowardice on Stan's part (laughter), and I don't blame him for it. Every time he went to college campuses, people would say, 'How could you do this? How could this happen?' He got tired of saying, 'It was all Gerry's idea!' so he told me we had to bring her back."

"Steve Gerber, who was a writer here at that time, said, 'Why don't we just put her into TALES OF THE ZOMBIE and call it GRAVEYARD GWEN?' (laughter) Just drag her up out of the grave! I thought that might be a bit extreme!" Gerry had introduced a character called the Jackal into the book, and decided to incorporate the return of Gwen into the Jackal storyline. Looking back, Gerry feels the Death of Gwen story perfectly illustrates Spidey's theme of Power and Responsibility. "I wanted to explore the double-edged sword of taking responsibility for everything. Sometimes you take responsibility for something that destroys you."

It was during the Jackal saga that Gerry introduced another character who would have a lasting impact on Marveldom: The Punisher! "I wanted

to come up with a non-super-powered villain that could go up against Spider-Man. I had read a couple of the Executioner books, and I kind of liked that milieu. I came up with a costume sketch, and then John Romita turned it into something that somebody would actually wear. I got paid $300 for that issue. The book itself is now worth something like $400, which is more than I was paid to write it! (laughter)"

Among his favorite Marvel titles that he has worked on, Gerry said, "I loved DAREDEVIL. I think that was one of the most successful runs on any book that I had. SPIDER-MAN. FANTASTIC FOUR, certainly, was another gift. I enjoyed THOR; I had a fertile period on that. The HULK—that was fun. IRON MAN and SUB-MARINER, I don't think were particularly successful for me.

"I had my hand in just about every book—I did the first DRACULA, WEREWOLF BY NIGHT. It was really fun!" At his peak, Gerry was writing six books a month—roughly 120 pages every four weeks! Gerry noted that being such a fast writer has proven very helpful in his TV career!

Asked to name some of his favorite Marvel artists he worked with, Gerry says, "Obviously John Romita was just a major good experience. I enjoyed working with Gil Kane. Ross Andru was terrific. John Buscema...these are legends! I mean, these are people that you just look at and you say, 'I'm working with THAT guy?!' Herb Trimpe was a terrific storyteller. I learned a lot working with Herb.

"Then there was Gene Colan, who did the most interesting art of all...This is not saying anything bad about the other guys...but his stuff had this kind of alternate reality feeling to it that I really enjoyed. We also had some great inkers. We had Tom Palmer, we had Joe Sinnott..I was just wallowing in this bath of talent!"

Gerry holds the record for the shortest stint as Editor-In-Chief of any editor. "I was on staff at Marvel for about a month. I was Editor In Chief at Marvel in 1976-77, between Marv Wolfman and Archie Goodwin. I was too young, I think, to take on all that responsibility. I was 23. While I appreciated the honor, I don't think I was really up to it!"

In 1978, Gerry made the move from New York to sunny California, where he collaborated on eight screenplays with fellow comics writer, Roy Thomas. Gerry describes his screenwriting experience as a successful one. "We did about eight scripts together, and 25 percent of them got produced, which is a pretty good track record!" (The two produced films were CONAN THE DESTROYER and FIRE AND ICE, an animated film directed by Ralph Bakshi.)

In the early eighties, Gerry made the move into animated cartoons, writing such series as "G.I. Joe" and "Transformers". A decade later, he moved up to writing live-action shows, first on "The Father Dowling Mysteries" starring Tom Bosley—a show where Gerry was quickly promoted to producer. After that came another crime series, "Under Suspicion," about a female detective. Now he is the supervising producer on "Players," a show starring Ice-T which airs Saturday nights on ABC.

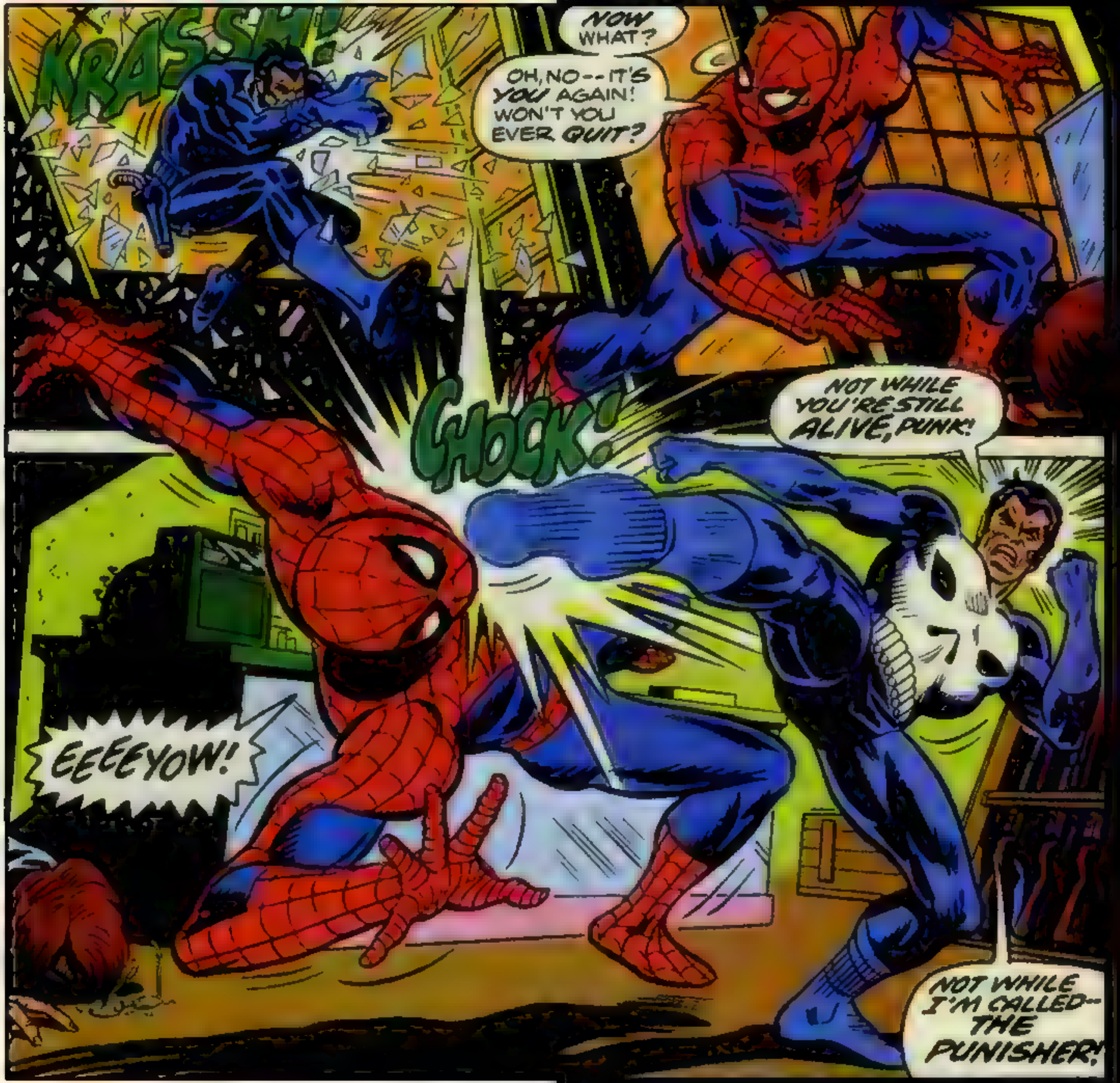
Gerry observes that "working on 'Players' in some ways resembles my comic book experience, since I'm working with Dick Wolf, whose work I have admired for many years. Dick was a writer on 'Hill Street Blues'...and 'Miami Vice,' and then started 'Law & Order'...he is an icon in this business. So it's sort of like working with Stan again."

It's been several years since Gerry wrote his last comic book, and he doesn't see himself returning to the field anytime soon. "I don't have the time," he notes. Asked how he drifted out of comics, Gerry responds, "I didn't drift! I just left! (laughter) I was finishing up my run on SPIDER-MAN When I first got the gig on 'Father Dowling,' and I couldn't really do both." Looking back on his years as a comics scribe, Gerry recalls, "It was a simpler life! (laughter) But I think I pretty much said everything that I could possibly say in that medium. There's not much reason for me to be doing comics (anymore)."

Asked if he has any last lingering regrets about killing off Peter Parker's first love, Gerry's answer is surprising. "Not at all. The regret I do have is in bringing her back. I should not have bowed to that pressure. Not that, at age 21, you have much choice, but I think that was a real mistake, and it put an unseemly coda to the tragedy."

Fortunately, Gerry wasn't around to see the storm that erupted when his Spider-Clone character came back!

—Barry Dutter



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

WORD SEARCH

BY LYSA HAWKINS

HELP SPIDEY FIND THE FOLLOWING WORDS FROM THE PUZZLE BELOW!

THE WORDS

AUNT ANNA
BEETLE
BLACK CAT
DOC OCK
ELECTRO
ESU (EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY)
FLASH
GLORY GRANT
GREEN GOBLIN
HOBGOBLIN
HYDROMAN
JACKAL
J.JONAH JAMESON
KINGPIN
KRAVEN
MARYJANE
MAY
MIDTOWN (HIGH)
MORBIUS
PUMA
RADIOACTIVE
(JAZZY JOHNNY) ROMITA
ROSE
SCORPION
SHOCKER
SPIDER (MAN)
STAN LEE
VENOM
VULTURE
WEB SHOOTERS

J	J	O	H	N	N	E	T	B	N	H	Z	K	E	S	U	M	I	N	M	A	Y	R	O	M	I	E	Z	P	E
E	J	R	O	B	B	E	N	R	E	B	E	E	T	L	O	S	M	E	N	T	I	L	Z	A	T	T	I	F	V
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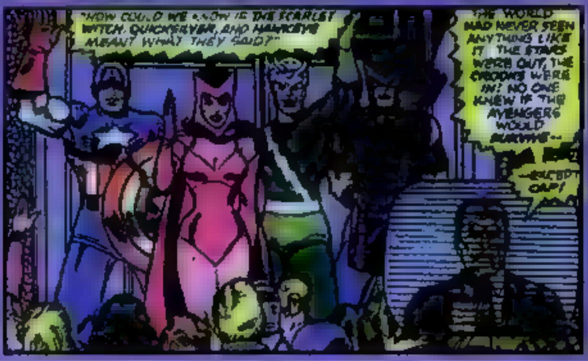
Golden Crisp
ALPHA-BITS
ALPHA-BITS
Honey Nut SHREDDED WHEAT
Frosted SHREDDED WHEAT

MARVEL CHRONICLES 24

1976 PART 3:

THE FOWLEST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF THEM ALL!



Among the real veteran Marvel readers out there, the new relaunch of **THE AVENGERS** not only moves the series into the future, but conjures fond memories of the past. Those longtime readers, after all, remember George Pérez's original run on **THE AVENGERS**, back in 1976, when he collaborated on it with Steve Englehart, writer of one of the finest periods in the book's history.

As the 1976 issues began, Englehart and Pérez had dispatched three of the Avengers—Thor, Hawkeye, and Moondragon—through time to the 19th century American West in search of the team's greatest enemy, the time lord Kang the Conqueror. There the three Avengers encountered some unexpected allies: five of Marvel Comics' Western heroes!

There were two of Marvel's longest running characters, Kid Colt and the Rawhide Kid, both of whom had unjustly been blamed for murders. Despite all their good deeds in stopping real criminals, both "Kids" had been branded as outlaws: in this, they were forebears of Marvel's super heroes of the 1960s, especially Spider-Man and the X-Men, who were young modern day "outlaws."

Then there was lawyer Matt Hawk, who was secretly the masked gunslinger known as the Two-Gun Kid: he was obviously a forerunner of Daredevil.

Not until after Marvel had launched its Silver Age of super heroes was the next character created. Originally he was known as the Ghost Rider, but after the first skull-headed cyclist by that name turned up, Marvel changed his name to the Night Rider. That didn't work either, since people at Marvel eventually realized that Ku Klux Klansmen were known as "night riders," so he was finally labeled the Phantom Rider, and that's the name that stuck.

Now if you think that's confusing, consider this: there have been four Phantom Riders, three in the past and their modern day counterpart! It's unclear whether the one in this storyline is the original or his second successor, who turned bad in another time travel tale Englehart spun years later in **WEST COAST AVENGERS**.

The Phantom Rider's gimmick was that thanks to his phosphorescent costume that made him glow in the dark, he convinced bad guys that he was a supernatural being out to avenge their crimes.

Finally, there was the Ringo Kid, a Marvel western hero who never achieved the popularity of the other four.

Meanwhile, in the present day, the other Avengers were investigating the Brand Corporation, a "think tank" run by the powerful Roxxon Oil Corporation. At this time Roxxon was controlled by a man named Hugh Jones, who had been kidnapped by the Serpent Squad in a storyline Englehart had written in **CAPTAIN AMERICA**. The Squad had forced Jones to wear the Serpent Crown, an ancient object of power that drew its mystical energies from the primeval serpent god Set (who was best known to Marvel readers as a deity worshipped by Thoth-Amon and other evil wizards in the pages of **CONAN**). The Squad members thought the Crown would merely reduce Jones to submission, but now, months later, Jones was still under its influence, and willingly so.

The Crown linked him with the man who wore its counterpart on a parallel Earth in an alternate dimension, who had become president of its United States. Since this was 1976 Englehart made that president Nelson Rockefeller, who was the longtime governor of New York State in the real, non-fictional world, who had repeatedly and unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for the presidency, and who was actually an admirable man, hardly a demon-worshipper!

Rockefeller is now long dead, and according to the rules of "Marvel time," it has only been at least ten years since the events depicted in the original **FANTASTIC FOUR #1**. So, as far as current continuity is concerned, it couldn't "really" have been Rockefeller in that story. George Olshevsky, the original compiler of Marvel's official indexes to various series, came up with the concept of "topical references" that are not "official" parts of continuity, like depictions of contemporary politicians. Rockefeller as president is one of these. So perhaps some of you might want to guess who Englehart's evil president would have been in terms of today's continuity.

Tagging along with the Avengers on this mission was some unexpected help in the form of another star of a Marvel comic outside the world of super heroes: Patsy Walker! Since the late 1940s Patsy had starred in her own comics about her life growing up with her best friend Hedy Wolfe and her boyfriend Buzz Baxter. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby even had Patsy and Hedy turn up in the crowd at Reed and Sue Richards' wedding. But as the

super hero genre took over comics, genres like Westerns and "girls' comics" fell by the wayside; Englehart had decided to reintroduce Patsy and Buzz as husband and wife supporting players in his short-lived **BEAST** series in **AMAZING ADVENTURES**. But Buzz, now a military man, had turned corrupt and was now in league with Hugh Jones and his multidimensional conspiracy.

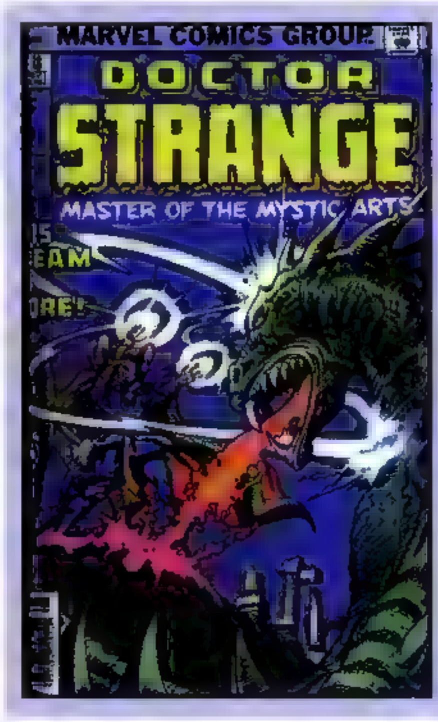
(Later stories established that the Patsy in the super hero comics was the daughter of the writer of the old **PATSY WALKER** comics, who had named her characters after her daughter and her friends. The current Patsy eventually married, of all people, Daimon Hellstrom, back when he was depicted as a good guy, not the ruler of hell. In the recent **HELLSTORM** series Patsy was seemingly killed, which seems a cruel and inappropriate fate for the spunky and delightful heroine of generations of girls who read comics!)

But back to happier times for Patsy: estranged from Buzz, she turned up at Avengers Mansion demanding that the Beast keep his promise to make her into a super hero. And weirdly enough, Patsy's wish came true! As the Avengers were poking around a Brand building, Patsy came across a costume once worn by the 1970s super heroine called the Cat (who is now known as Tigra). Patsy put it on and discovered that it somehow amplified her athletic abilities (or so she thought), and she renamed herself the Hellcat.

Patsy was soon in for her trial by fire. To combat the Avengers, Jones sent for the super heroes who aided the President of the alternate Earth: the Squadron Supreme, that team who seem oddly reminiscent of another famous team of heroes you may have heard of. Englehart and Perez even added a new member, the amphibious Amphibion. Rockefeller had used the Serpent Crown's power to put the Squadron under his mental control, and Jones had them battle the Avengers, first on the Avengers' Earth and then on their own. Ultimately, the Avengers captured Rockefeller's Crown and brought it back to their own Earth, and the Squadron regained their free will and turned against their evil president.

And back in the past, Hawkeye, Thor, and Moondragon defeated Kang, who seemingly perished before their eyes, along with his future self, Immortus. But Immortus, as always, was playing his mind games with the Avengers: neither Kang nor Immortus was truly gone for good.

The time- and dimension-traveling teams of Avengers were reunited in time for their 150th issue and for a changing of the guard in more ways than one. The Avengers lineup has continually been in flux throughout its history, and now Thor, Hawkeye, and Moondragon, as well as newly appointed Avenger Hellcat, went on reserve status, while the Beast was granted full active membership. Unexpectedly, Steve Englehart abruptly left both the series and Marvel, and Gerry Conway took over as writer.



But the biggest surprise arrived in a crate delivered to Avengers Mansion during the press conference to announce the lineup changes. Out burst Wonder Man, the Avengers' one-time ally who had long been thought to be dead. He seemed to be under a spell, and so he was. His brother, the Grim Reaper, a longtime Avengers enemy, had hired the Black Talon, a villainous voodoo priest, to resurrect him as a kind of zombie. Oddly, without any real explanation, Wonder Man managed to shake off the spell over the next few issues, regained his free will, and became an active member of the Avengers.

One of the most creative writers at Marvel in the 1970s, Steve Englehart had made his mark on several other titles that year before he left.

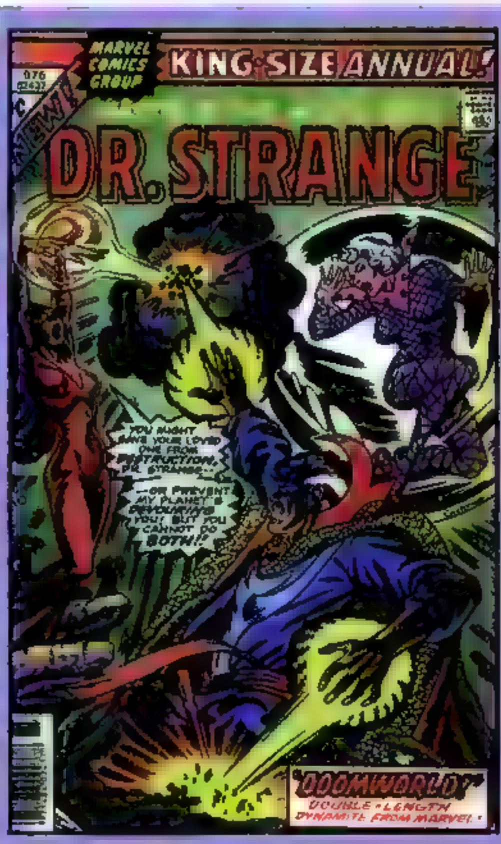
You can tell from the very name of **SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP** that it was one of Marvel's more unusual ideas for a series back in the 1970s. The leads were Doctor Doom, Marvel's greatest super-villain, and the Sub-Mariner, whose villainous days were long behind him, but whose own series had been cancelled and, in effect, needed a place to stay.

It was here that Steve Englehart created a new masked vigilante, the Shroud. It is hard to say what exactly Englehart had in mind when he invented this character. Much of his origin, his dark costume, and his mission to fight crime made him a Marvel version of Batman, but he was blind like Daredevil. The Shroud lacked DD's super-senses but could "see" through mystical, mental means. In the course of his origin, the Shroud also seemed to have stumbled upon the same mysterious order of monks who had forged Doctor Doom's armor, but why Englehart threw that into the mix is hard to say.

My most memorable moment in the series that year came when the Fantastic Four once again tried to fight Doom only to be stopped by then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who informed them that the United States had just signed a non-interference treaty with Doom's kingdom of Latveria!

Englehart's final issues of **DOCTOR STRANGE** did not match his peak on the previous two years of the series, but nonetheless demonstrated so much creativity that his sudden departure after issue #18 came as a shock.

The year began with a continuation of a storyline in which Doctor Strange traveled through literal nightmare worlds, in one of which he was forced back into his past as an alcoholic derelict. Of course, it



was his old enemy Nightmare who was to blame, having taken Eternity, the sentience of the cosmos, prisoner, enabling him to restructure reality at will.

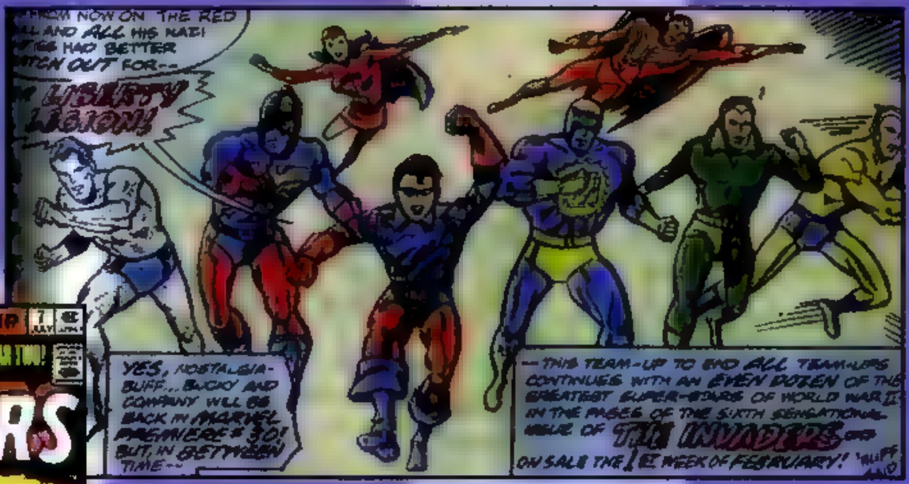
Next came the memorable crossover with **TOMB OF DRACULA** #44; Marv Wolfman, of course, wrote the TOMB side, and the great Gene Colan was already the penciler of both series; perhaps that fact had inspired the crossover in the first place. Readers no doubt were astounded not only to see the vampire lord murder Doctor Strange, but to then witness Strange rise again as a vampire himself. The Sorcerer Supreme succeeded in curing himself and thought by the story's end he had obliterated Dracula from existence. But Strange was wrong, and the new war between himself and the Count would resume in years to come.

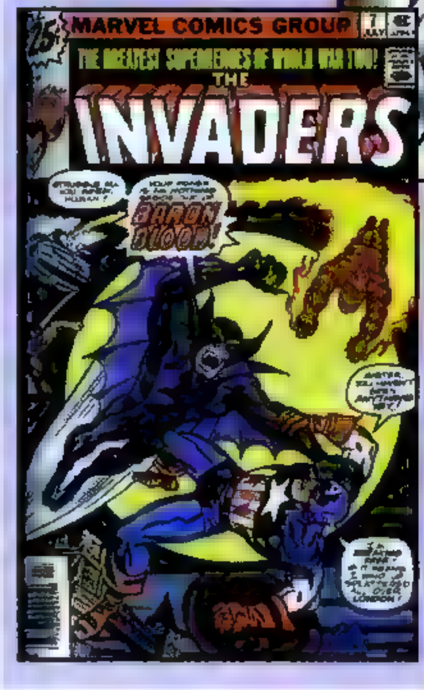
In his final issues Englehart sent Doctor Strange and his partner Clea back in time to trace "The Occult History of America," founded on the historical fact that a number of key figures in American history were members of the secret order of Freemasons. Keep in mind this was in 1976, and hence was yet another bicentennial-themed storyline.

First Doc and Clea encountered the English explorer Sir Francis Drake in the 17th century. Moving ahead a hundred years they then met Benjamin Franklin, who, as history notes, was quite the ladies' man and proved it by seducing Clea!

What repercussions did Englehart intend for Clea's infidelity? Exactly what mystical knowledge and abilities did some of the Founding Fathers—or, at least, their Marvel Universe counterparts— have? Where was all of this leading?

It seems we will never know. Englehart quit the series and Marvel due to behind-the-scenes difficulties, and his successors swiftly dumped the American history angle and headed off in a new story direction. Even when Englehart returned to Marvel in the 1980s, though he picked up some of his old storylines, like the saga of Mantis, he did not go back to this one. Ah, well, perhaps if Steve ever returns again, someone can prevail upon him to finally reveal what Franklin was up to. (Hmm, makes you wonder if that business with the kite in the electrical storm was some sort of ritual, doesn't it?)





Those among you who might wonder what the events of twenty-two years ago have to do with today's comics might do well to consider this. 1976 saw the publication of the first **DOCTOR STRANGE ANNUAL**, plotted and gorgeously illustrated by P. Craig Russell, otherwise known as the artist on Marvel's **KILLRAVEN** series (then still written by Don McGregor and appearing in **AMAZING ADVENTURES**). Russell was dissatisfied with the scripting of the annual, but only last year got his chance to redo the entire story in a special bookshelf format entitled "What Disturbs You, Stephen Strange?" So you readers never know when some "obscure" but classic tale from the past will resurface to affect Marvel's present.

The year before, Roy Thomas and the great comic strip artist Frank Robbins had launched a new series about the Avengers' counterpart in World War II: **THE INVADERS**, starring Captain America, Bucky, Sub-Mariner, the original Human Torch, and his partner Toro. In a three-part story that crossed over into **MARVEL PREMIERE** #29, Thomas gathered another batch of characters Marvel published in the 1940s into another team intended to guard the home front: the Liberty Legion. The lineup included two creations of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby—the Blue Diamond and the Red Raven—two early creations of Stan Lee's—Jack Frost and the Whizzer—plus the Patriot, the Thin Man, and Miss America.

Thomas no doubt decided that if World War II had costumed heroes, then why shouldn't there have been some in World War I? And so, **INVADERS** #7 introduced Lord Falsworth, who was formerly Britain's costumed agent of World War II, the original Union Jack. That same issue introduced two more important characters. One was Union Jack's nemesis, the Nazi vampire Baron Blood, the most famous of the villains created in **THE INVADERS**. And then there was Falsworth's daughter Jacqueline, who, through a strange turn of events, became endowed with superhuman speed; it would not be till the next year's issues, though, that she would become the first female Invader, Spitfire.

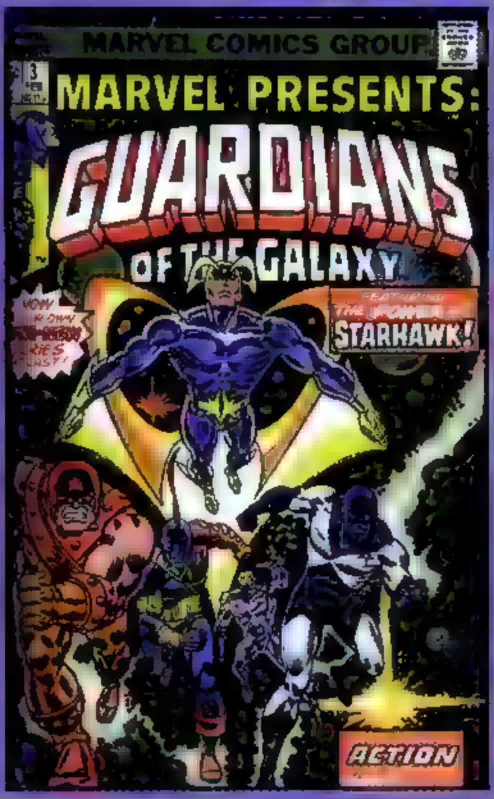
And there was so much more in the Marvel of 1976! True, the horror line had been cut back. Morbius had taken over from Man-Thing in FEAR, but it was cancelled in 1975, along with **THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER**, which had brought Mary Shelley's creation into the present day. But the team of Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan, and Tom Palmer were still creating classics every month in **TOMB OF DRACULA**, the Johnny Blaze version of Ghost Rider kept cycling through his own series, while writer Doug Moench

made **WEREWOLF BY NIGHT** his own. A supposed villain he co-created for that series turned hero when Moon Knight received his first solo story in **MARVEL PREMIERE** #28.

Roy Thomas and John Buscema continued their masterful run on **CONAN THE BARBARIAN**, while adapting Robert E. Howard tales set later in Conan's life in the black and white **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN**. Another savage hero, Ka-Zar, was now the title character in his own comic book. And another great pulp magazine hero, Doc Savage, was now starring in book-length adventures in his own black and white magazine.

POWER MAN was still going strong, and over in **JUNGLE ACTION** writer Don McGregor started a then-controversial storyline about the Black Panther's struggle against the Ku Klux Klan.

In the realm of science fiction **ASTOUNDING TALES** and its series about the original Deathlok, set in the far future of (gasp!) 1985, came to an end, but the Guardians of the Galaxy, a super-team based in the much more safely far off thirtieth century, finally got their own series starting in **MARVEL PRESENTS** #3. A dying alien warrior bestowed his superhuman powers on a Long Island teenager named Richard Rory in the first issue of **THE MAN CALLED NOVA** by Marv Wolfman and Sal Buscema. And Marvel even had a black and white **PLANET OF THE APES** magazine showcasing brilliant artwork by Mike Ploog and Tom Sutton.



Amidst all the richness of the stories and artwork that year, there was one writer's work that stood out for its unequaled strangeness, unpredictability, humor, and incisive commentary, and that was Steve Gerber.

Gerber wrapped up his stint on **THE DEFENDERS** with some of his oddest—and most characteristic—storylines yet. He had already reintroduced the Headmen, a trio of villains, two of whom had unusual heads indeed. The human head of the leader, the surgeon Dr. Arthur Nagan, had been transplanted onto a gorilla's body. They gained a new member who was the strangest of all: Ruby Thursday (whose name was an allusion to a Beatles song), an otherwise attractive woman whose head was an artificial red globe that could alter its shape!

The highlight of Gerber's work at Marvel, though, was the unforgettable **HOWARD THE DUCK** series. Forget the movie; forget even Howard's more recent comics appearances. None of them capture the sheer brilliance of this original run of stories. A talking duck "trapped in a world he never made," Howard somehow embodied the universal experience of struggling against a world filled with violence, stupidity, and just plain nonsense. In the very first issue he felt enough despair to attempt suicide. But he didn't go through with it: Howard was too full of life, and armed with his low tolerance for fools and his biting wit, he acted for us all in fighting back, if only verbally.

HOWARD's first two issues were drawn by Frank Brunner, who had already demonstrated in **DOCTOR STRANGE** his amazing ability to make the surreal look real. The best **HOWARD** artists, including Gene Colan, who took over with issue #4, somehow made this refugee from a funny animal cartoon blend seamlessly into the more realistically drawn world of the Marvel Universe.

Initially **HOWARD** parodied other comics genres: the first issue, for example, went after sword and sorcery, as Howard scaled a tower made of credit cards, donned a Conan-like costume, and did battle with Pro-Rata, a capitalist wizard who sought to use magic and accounting techniques to dominate the universe.

In the course of such a story, there must be a scantily clad damsel in distress, and Howard found just such a captive: artist's model Beverly Switzler, destined to become his true love. Beverly became the book's co-star, and the odd but loving rapport between this short-tempered waterfowl and this sweet, beautiful human woman became a surprisingly affecting symbol for love triumphing over even the greatest of differences.

Howard soon found himself battling the dreaded Space Turnip, becoming a "Master of Quak Fu," and meeting a giant, living Gingerbread Man. But Gerber quickly moved beyond genre parodies to satiric, and sometimes deadly serious, social commentary. The "Quak Fu" story in issue #3 was actually an attack on gang violence, long before it became a regular subject in the news media, and even a critique on glamorizing violence in entertainment, surely a surprising topic to tackle in a comic book! The Gingerbread Man was only one element of a story that also went after cult leader Reverend Joon Moon Yuc and his Yucchies, continuing Gerber's satiric assault from **DEFENDERS.**

It was 1976, the bicentennial year, Howard was the talk of fandom, and the demand could not be denied: Howard the Duck ran for president! Even before #7, the election issue, came out, fans in the know were wearing their "Get Down America!" campaign buttons proudly. (You see, you get down—feathers—from a duck, get it?) Backed by the All-Night Party, faced with opponents as lame as Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, Howard clearly should have won.

But then scandal struck. A malcontent bellboy snapped a picture of Howard taking a bubble bath with campaign worker Beverly Switzler. Horrified at this interspecies romance, the American public turned its back on Howard's candidacy.

Oliver Stone would have smelled a rat, and he would have been right. But to learn the identity and motives of the rodent behind this conspiracy against the American electorate. . .you'll have to wait till our next column, on 1977.

—Peter Sanderson

ON SALE APRIL 1

X-MEN: THE MANGA NO. 6

MIYAKO KOJIMA

As the **Beast** goes on trial, **Sabretooth** makes a surprise appearance in the courtroom! But that pales next to the activities of **Magneto**, who's intent on turning humanity's weapons of destruction into his own tools! *2.99*

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Guest-starring Namor, the Sub-Mariner! The **Man-Thing** has pursued **Ellen Brandt** to the sunken city of Atlantis—their mission: to reintegrate another fragment of the shattered Nexus of All Realities! *2.99*

MARVEL PRESENTS

ON SALE APRIL 1

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COVER BY ANDREW CURRIE & ART NICHOLS
DOUG MOENCH/TOM SUTTON
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While **Captain Kirk, Spock** and **Dr. McCoy** are called away to attend a crucial conference, the crew joins a scientific study of a new life form that could forever change the face of interstellar communication! But when Orion pirates attack, the Enterprise must protect the alien—as **Lt. Commander Sulu** takes charge! *2.50*

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Marvel explores the mysteries of space in an all-new sci-fi adventure! 25 years after it's maiden voyage the Seeker 3000 continues to search for a habitable world for its crew. Onboard, however, turmoil rules. Shaw has authorized the creation of clones from the stored DNA cargo. Meanwhile, the telepaths among the crew, led by the enigmatic **Phaedra**, have secluded themselves into a deserted part of the immense ship as a dangerous caste system emerges. *2.99*

DOCTOR WHO NO. 264
VARIOUS
The official, full-color photo magazine celebrating Doctor Who! *5.99*

STAR TREK®: STARFLEET ACADEMY™ NO. 19
CHRIS COOPER/CHRIS RENAUD/ANDY LANNING
Frantic final issue! Omega Squad's plan to lure the **Klingon First Cadre** to Rejak VI (to exact retribution for Kamilah Goldstein's death) works perfectly—that is, until **Kovold** shows up to rescue his mates! Now **Pava** (mad with desire for vengence) and her ex-lover (overcome by battle madness) fight tooth-and-nail inside a Klingon shuttle! What brought on Kovold's madness, and what is the nameless and terrifying gelatinous mass that is trying to escape from the shuttle's hold? The answer leads not only to the conclusion to Pava's quest for vengeance—but also to this series! *1.99*

ON SALE APRIL 29

CONAN: THE RIVER OF BLOOD NO. 1 (OF 3)
COVER BY CLAUDIO CASTELLINI
ROLAND GREEN/GEOF ISHERWOOD
Kicking off a kick-butt Conan adventure! In the jungles of the Black Kingdoms, **Conan** and the female warrior known as **Valeria** encounter danger in the form of giant crocodiles—which are controlled by a sorcerer! Is the mysterious magician known as **Enduin** friend or foe? Conan must find out as he and his beautiful companion fight for their lives, caught in the jaws of death! CONAN AND THE RIVER OF BLOOD is adapted from the four-part tale originally told in SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, which was in turn a sequel to **Robert E. Howard's** original story of the meeting of Conan and Valeria in RED NAILS. *2.50*

STAR TREK®: EARLY VOYAGES™ NO. 17
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It's the explosive series' conclusion as Captain Pike and the Klingon called Kaaj are forced to team up! On the Enterprise, **Admiral April** and **Number One** clash as April orders an attack on the Klingons! Meanwhile, Pike and Kaaj, who have been busted by the **Tamazi** while trying to infiltrate their fabled cache of weapons, must fight as a unit—despite the fact that they're mortal enemies! *1.99*

MARVEL HEROES

ON SALE APRIL 1

DAREDEVIL NO. 376
"FLYING BLIND" PART 1 OF 4
SCOTT LOBDELL/CULLY HAMNER/JASON MARTIN
A four-issue storyarc by the new creative team of **Scott Lobdell** and **Cully Hamner** that finds **Daredevil** with his sight restored—but blind to his own identity! Stripped of his memories, his personality, his very "life," Matt Murdock begins this tale as an agent for the super-spy organization known as **S.H.I.E.L.D.**! And to complicate matters, the one agent who's aware about Matt's secret assignment is dead! Now it's up to the man that we know (even if he doesn't) as Daredevil to take down the criminal empire that threatens all of Europe! *1.99*

FANTASTIC FOUR NO. 6
CHRIS CLAREMONT/SALVADOR LARROCA/ART THIBERT
Chris Claremont takes the writing reigns, bringing with him new villains, new dangers, revelations galore and a surprise ending that will change two lives forever! The FF collides with a threat from the most unexpected source in a battle they cannot lose—and dare not win! Plus: The Invisible Woman faces a temptation from her past! A guest-appearance by **Iron Fist** and **Heroes For Hire**! And last but not least, it's Reed Richards as you've never seen him before! *1.99*

KA-ZAR NO. 14
FLIP COVERS BY ANDY KUBERT & KENNY MARTINEZ
MARK WAID & CHRISTOPHER PRIEST/ANDY KUBERT & KENNY MARTINEZ/JESSE DELPERDANG
Shanna is bursting with the Power of Creation—and she wants to leave the Earth with the **High Evolutionary**! Can **Ka-Zar** stop the ultimate power couple and save the Savage Land from utter devastation?! *2.99*

MARVEL TEAM-UP NO. 10 STARRING THE SUB-MARINER & THE THING
TOM PEYER & GLENN HERDLING/PAT OLLIFFE/AL WILLIAMSON
The art team that launched MARVEL TEAM-UP is back—and they brought along the cornerstone of the FF: the ever lovin' blue-eyed Thing! The Namor saga kicks into overdrive as the Sub-Mariner seeks revenge on the surface-dwelling businessman responsible for the pollution of Atlantis! *1.99*

ON SALE APRIL 8

ALPHA FLIGHT NO. 11
STEVEN T. SEAGLE/ROGER CRUZ
Alpha Flight teams with Marvel's most popular *micro-sized* guest stars in a race to save two worlds! Unwitting prisoners in the Microverse, the squad finds itself the honored guests of **Baron Zebek** of the Jungle Zone. But is the Baron's Eden actually an enormous threat to Canada?! *1.99*

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COVER BY MIKE ZECK & BOB SMITH
TERRY KAVANAGH/RAMON BERNADO/IAN AIKEN
Is Nick Fury alive?! Find out in this all-new limited series that leaps from the pages of CAPTAIN AMERICA! The world believes that **Nick Fury**, leader of the world's premiere espionage organization, was killed by the Punisher. Tell that to **Sharon Carter**, the sexy super-spy code-named **Agent 13**! She's determined to find him—so she can kill him! *2.99*

IRON MAN NO. 5
KURT BUSIEK/SEAN CHEN/ERIC J. CANNON
It's Iron Man vs. the all-new, all-destructive Firebrand—with an entire island nation at stake! Even if Iron Man can defeat the walking blast furnace, he still has to find a way to stop the volcano that Firebrand triggered—and if he doesn't, everyone on Isla Suerte (including **Jim Rhodes** and **Morgan Stark**) will die! And if you thought Sean Chen's rendition of Iron Man was cool, just wait until you see his revamp of Firebrand! *1.99*

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Frightening final issue! The bone-chilling conclusion to the story arc starring Hannibal King—vampire detective! *1.99*

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COVER BY CARLOS PACHECO
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In 1942, the Allies' greatest champions—**Captain America, the original Human Torch** and **Namor, the Sub-Mariner**—are gathered together by military intelligence in response to the theft of U-235 from the top-secret Manhattan Project! But the Nazis aren't in possession of the Uranium—**Baron Strucker** and the organization that will become **Hydra** are! And the Baron has a secret edge that insures his victory! *2.99*

ON SALE APRIL 15

CAPTAIN AMERICA NO. 6

COVER BY RON GARNEY
MARK WAID/DALE EAGLESHAM/SCOTT KOBLISH
The sinister **Skrulls** have launched a new infiltration of Earth, and only **Captain America** stands in their way—or will he?! ***1.99***

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"What if the Thing had stayed in Doctor Doom's Tiny Town?" Ben Grimm finally has everything he wants: a human body, the love of **Alicia Masters** and a normal life—too bad it's all a sham! In the now classic adventure entitled "Terror in a Tiny Town" (from FANTASTIC FOUR #236), **Doctor Doom** trapped his hated enemies in a miniature city. **Reed Richards** eventually led the FF out of their unique prison—but in this reality, Ben Grimm refuses to leave! ***1.99***

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Available again! Released in conjuction with AVENGERS #5, this 352-page trade paperback is the perfect introduction to the mighty Squadran Supreme. Collecting **Mark Gruenwald's** influential twelve-issue maxi-series, SQUADRON SUPREME features an all-new painted cover by **Alex Ross**. ***24.99***

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We've seen the **Expeditor** and **Landau, Luckman & Lake** planning some glorious scenario for **Deadpool** since issue #1. Now, we reveal their astounding plan, and 'Pool's surprising role in it! Is Wade Wilson in over his head? Big time! ***1.99***

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Quicksilver runs right into the fiery clutches of the incendiary mutant known as Pyro—and his new allies: Omega Red, Avalanche, the Fenri twins, Random and Feral! Why have they been assembled by **Exodus**? ***1.99***

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After being attacked by the Earthly agents of the **Other**, the Surfer awakens to find himself human again—*on a Zenn-La that was never visited by Galactus!* In the company of **Shalla -Bal** (who bears a suspicious resemblance to **Alicia Masters**), **Norrin Radd** lives out the life he was denied! But paradise isn't everything he imagined! ***1.99***

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"IDENTITY CRISIS" CONCLUSION

TODD DEZAGO/MIKE WIERINGO/RICHARD CASE

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AMAZING SPIDER-MAN NO. 435

"IDENTITY CRISIS" CONCLUSION

TOM DEFALCO/MIKE DEODATO/BUD LAROSA

Straight from the pages of WOLVERINE come Roughouse and Bloodscream! Recruited by the **Black Tarantula**, the two tough guys are sent after the **Rose's** chief enforcer, the deadly **Delilah**—and her new partner, the rambunctious **Ricochet**! Meanwhile, **Mary Jane** stumbles upon the Tarantula's real reason for coming to America—and it's a stunning secret that hits a little too close to home! Plus: what was that package that **Alison Morgrain** was guarding for **Norman Osborn**? That's exactly what **Robbie Robertson** wants to know! *1.99*

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"IDENTITY CRISIS" CONCLUSION

HOWARD MACKIE/JOHN ROMITA JR.

Spider-Man must be proven innocent—but how will Dusk do it?! Working within the shadowed world of organized crime, the mysterious **Dusk** moves closer to absolving Spidey of the death of Joey Z—but can he restore the public's faith in the web-slinger? Plus: it's showdown time with the new-and-improved **Trapster**, the man that kicked Spider-Man's butt not once, but twice! *1.99*

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"IDENTITY CRISIS" CONCLUSION

J.M. DEMATTEIS/LUKE ROSS/DAN GREEN

Peter Parker faces the ultimate question: "Must there be a Spider-Man?" Peter Parker knows he must responsibly use his powers, but how can he continue being Spider-Man?! Especially when his new alter-ego—the pulse-pounding **Prodigy**—is the most popular hero in town?! Maybe it's time to hang up the webs for good and become his newly revered identity. And to help our beleagered hero make his decision, the vile villain called **Conundrum** returns for a rematch! *1.99*

X-MEN

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Look out, Cable, Domino's back– and so is Blaquesmith! Where was Cable's demanding mentor? And what will his re-appearance cost Cable? *1.99*

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JORGE GONZALEZ/JIMMY CHEUNG & LEO FERNANDEZ/ANDREW PEPOY
Captured by the **Confessor**, **Maverick** is taken to Moscow for a deadly showdown with **Ivan the Terrible**! *1.99*

UNCANNY X-MEN NO. 356
STEVEN T. SEAGLE/CHRIS BACHALO/TIM TOWNSEND
The five original X-Men reunite to face down what could be the return of the greatest threat in the history of the X-Men—the Phoenix! Chock full of the characterization that X-fans clamor for, this issue sets the tone for the future of the series as **Cyclops** begins to establish the new path of the X-Men! *1.99*

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STARRING THE X-MEN
RALPH MACCHIO/ANDY KUHN/HARRY CANDELARIO
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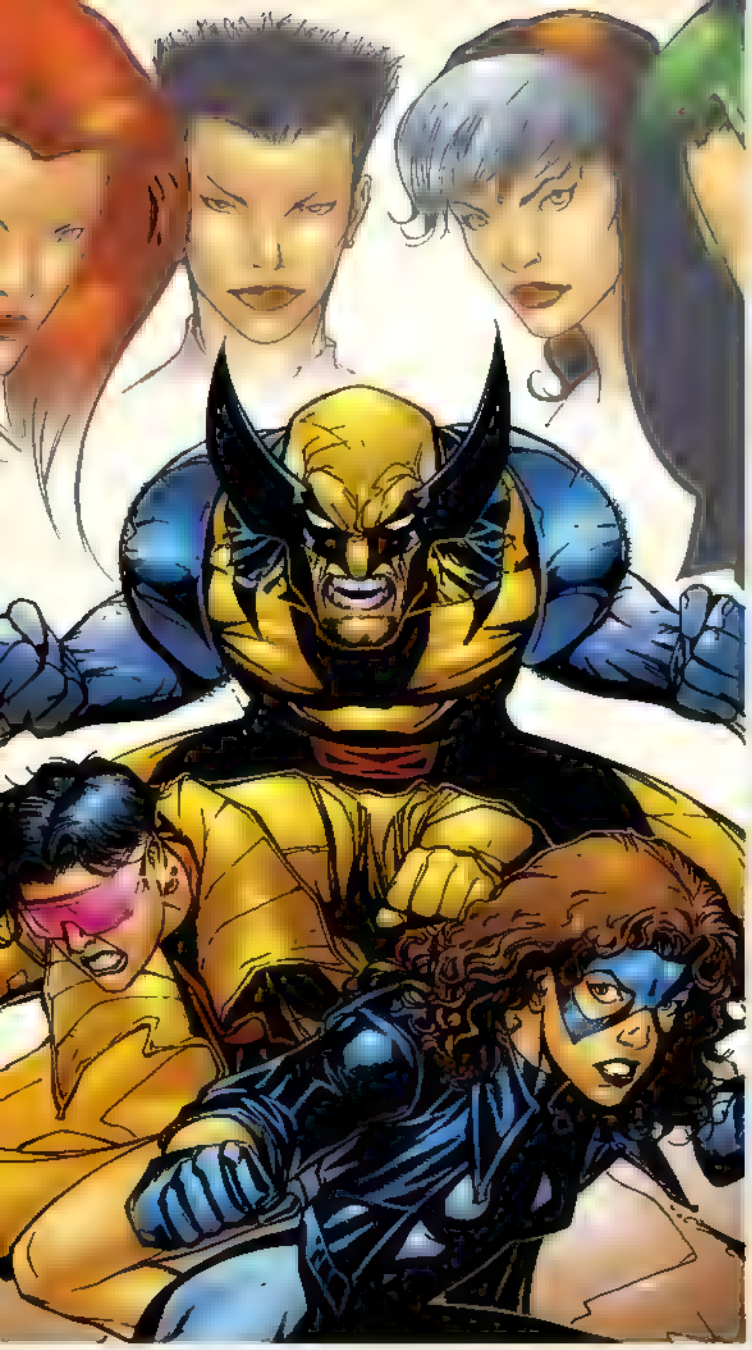
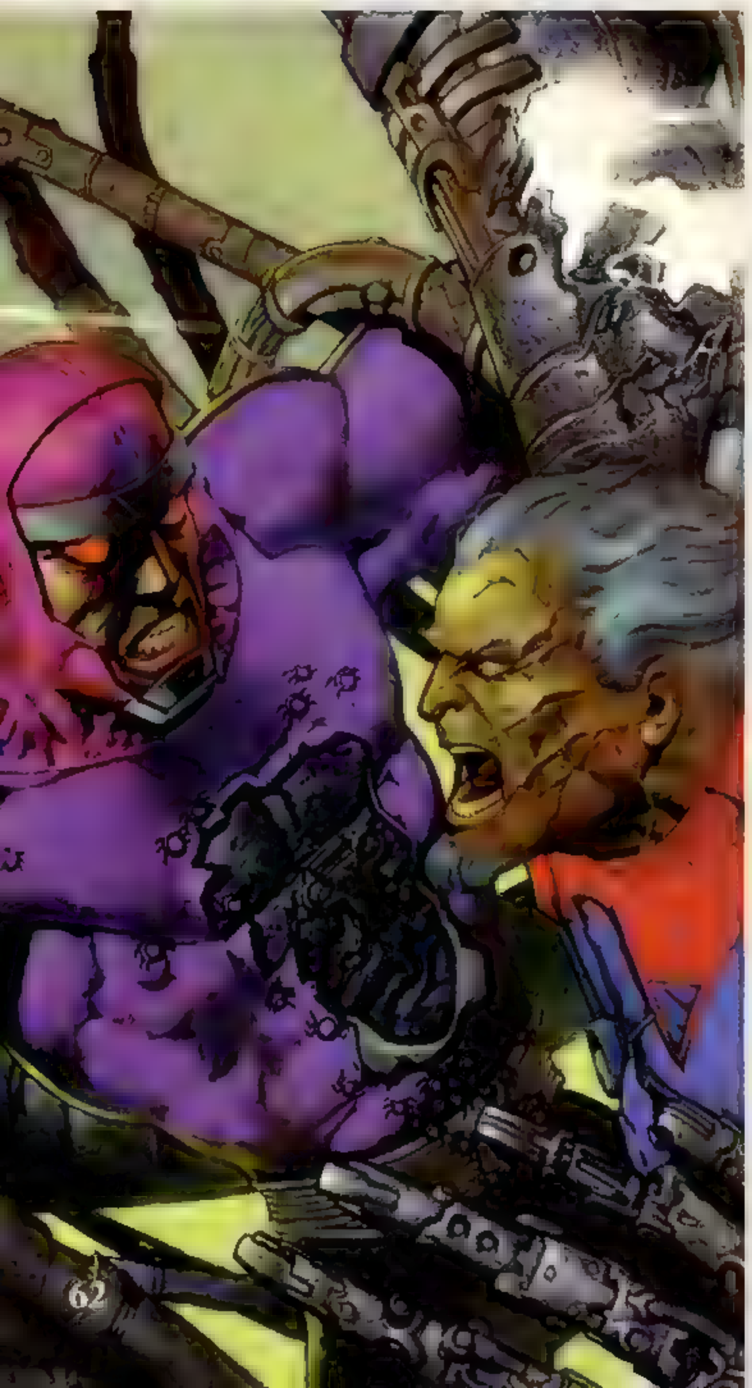
MARVEL ANNUAL '98
STARRING: MACHINE MAN & BASTION
WRAPAROUND PAINTED COVER BY ARIEL OLIVETTI
MICHAEL HIGGINS & KARL BOLLERS/MARTIN EGELAND/HOWARD M. SHUM
The true identity of Bastion was exposed in last month's CABLE & MACHINE MAN annual, and now it's time for the full story of his mind-blowing origin! *2.99*

X-FACTOR NO. 146
HOWARD MACKIE/LEE MODER/SCOTT KOBLISH
As **X-Factor** settles into their new headquarters, the **X.U.E.** members explore the lives of their host-bodies, learning that they might have exchanged one horrific set of lives for another. *1.99*

ON SALE APRIL 15

EXCALIBUR NO. 121
BEN RAAB/MELVIN RUBI/ROB HUNTER
Legion, the mutant that caused "The Age of Apocalypse" is back—or is he?! When Excalibur receives news from **Sabra** that Legion has resurfaced in Israel, **Colossus**, **Nightcrawler** and **Shadowcat** must track down the son of Professor X! *1.99*





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Viper wants **Wolverine** in the worst way, and she's drafted 6 of the people that Logan cares about most to get him! Only **Kitty Pryde** and **Jubilee** remain free to help Wolverine, but do they have any chance against the combined might of **Rogue**, **Psylocke**, **Tyger Tiger**, **Jessica Drew**, **Yukio** and **Phoenix** (not to mention **Hydra** and the **Hand**)?! *2.99*

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Concluding the never-before-seen team-up tale of Marvel's original mutant teams! The **X-Men** are in trouble and it's **Alpha Flight** to the rescue! Will Canada's greatest heroes be able to save the Children of the Atom in time? *2.99*

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Things heat up when Reignfire strikes! Plus: even more developments in the ever-complicated social lives of the members of X-Force! ... *1.99*

X-MEN NO. 76
CHRIS CLAREMONT/MAT BROOME

Marvel begins the celebration of the 35th anniversary of comicdom's #1 super team with the return of Chris Claremont to the X-Men! It's **Sabretooth** vs. the X-Men, but this time, Creed has an edge that makes him nigh unbeatable! *1.99*

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BEN RAAB/JIM CALIFIORE/MARK MCKENNA

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WRAPAROUND COVER BY ANTHONY CASTRILLO
RON MARZ/ANTHONY CASTRILLO

Doctor Doom, careening through the ages via his time platform, crashes key points in **X-Men** history as he searches for the one man who stands in the way of his plan for world domination: **Magneto**! *2.99*

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